DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 390 130 EA 027 233

AUTHOR Radnofsky, Mary L.; Spielmann, Guy
TITLE Shared Decision-Making and the Limits of Democratization: A Case Study of Site-Based Reform.
PUB DATE Apr 95
NOTE 79p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Observation Techniques; Clinical Supervision (of Teachers); Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnography; *Participative Decision Making; *Professional Development; Program Evaluation; Qualitative Research; *Staff Development; Teacher Effectiveness; *Teacher Evaluation; *Teacher Supervision

ABSTRACT

This paper presents findings of an ethnographic study of a school district's Staff Development, Supervision, and Evaluation Program (SDSEP). Data were gathered through interviews, observations, participant observation, analysis of kinesics and proxemics, semiotic analysis of discourse, unobtrusive measures, and analysis of official documents. The study sought to: (1) clarify the identity, origin, and mission of SDSEP; (2) define the image of SDSEP as perceived by teachers and administrators; (3) evaluate the congruence between the program's implementation and stated mission; (4) evaluate SDSEP as a concept; (5) evaluate the internal consistency of SDSEP; (6) evaluate program implementation; (7) evaluate the program in five schools; (8) provide a more complete picture of the full implementation of the program, following an evaluation of the pilot; (9) offer recommendations as to the continuation and nature of the SDSEP committee; (11) suggest program changes; and (12) suggest directions for future research. The paper discusses four core issues that emerged from the data--power, professionalism, information, and democratization. A conclusion is that the school district made strides in the development of interrelated components of evaluation, supervision, and staff development. However, there was a crucial need to educate all teachers and administrators in the value of the program, so that they would embrace its spirit and not simply engage in compliance. The appendix contains documents from the program notebook. (LMI)

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# SHARED DECISION-MAKING AND THE LIMITS OF DEMOCRATIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF SITE-BASED REFORM

## The Qualitative Evaluation of a School District's Staff Development, Supervision, and Evaluation Program

by

Mary L. Radnofsky, Ph.D.
The Socrates Institute

Guy Spielmann, Ph.D.
Georgetown University

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the
American Educational Research Association

San Francisco
April 1995

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# Preface
## How to Use This Report

It is important that this report be read in the same spirit in which it was written, so that its conclusions may be meaningful and useful to the Staff Development, Supervision and Evaluation Program committee and to the Larkman (a pseudonym) school community.

We wish to emphasize our belief that the Larkman Staff Development, Supervision, and Evaluation Program is an important and worthwhile endeavor, and that it holds great potential as a model for district-based attempts at reforming roles for teachers and administrators. We firmly believe that it should continue to receive support from the school community and from the Board of Education. We do not pretend to pass final judgment on this program; we only submit our conclusions and recommendations with the full understanding that only the members of the Larkman schools community should decide what to do with them. The criticisms that we make are only meant to be constructive.

The fact that there is no summary at the end of this report makes it necessary to read it in a continuous fashion. By its very nature, a qualitative research report cannot be compressed; its value resides precisely in its narrative approach, in its saturation of the issues at hand. It does not provide tables, numbers or even conclusions which can be neatly summarized into a few short paragraphs; our suggestions are woven into the text, because they would not make sense out of context, and thus could easily misinterpreted.

In addition, we are dealing with a program which was developed over the course of several years, which involved the interaction of a great number of people, and which must be understood in the complex social, psychological, educational and political setting of an entire school district. It would be dishonest to pretend that this complex system could be accurately portrayed in a few simple sketches, and that its problems could be remedied with a few simple suggestions.

Since we have had the past several months to explore in detail the inner workings of this program, we realize that it will take time for our readers to assimilate all that we include here. We fully expect them to be surprised at certain aspects, and we anticipate that they will embrace some of our views, while rejecting others.

Although we cannot be "objective," any more than any other human being can, we have been able to provide a different view than the people who have a direct, personal involvement in the daily life of the schools. For this very reason, we have not attempted to dilute our criticisms, even, and especially those regarding the committee which hired us to carry out this research. We trust that they expected no less from us.

The purpose of this report, then, as we see it, is to be used as a document to start a district-wide conversation about the Staff Development, Supervision and Evaluation Program. We urge the committee to ensure, in the most active way possible, that it be distributed and read by all constituencies in the district. We hope that it will be used as a text for staff meetings, and that all staff members --- especially those who have not demonstrated any particular interest in the program --- will have a chance to discuss it.

NOTE: Throughout this report, we refer to the Staff Development, Supervision and Evaluation Program as "SDSEP," to the Staff Development, Supervision and Evaluation Committee as "the committee," or "the framers." "Staff members" should be taken to mean both teachers and administrators.

# I. THE RESEARCH

## A) Characteristics of Ethnographic/Qualitative Research

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of Ethnographic/Qualitative Research is to discover theory, through the understanding of the multiple truths that exist, rather than to try and prove an existing theory. Members of an organization or a community have varying perspectives on how it is run, how they fit into the community, how programs work, and how things might be changed. These and other perspectives combine to create a mosaic of "multiple realities" which must be understood as a whole; case studies in qualitative research help identify how people involved in the program perceive its purpose and effectiveness, understand it, implement it, and prioritize it.

### 2. Methods of Data Collection

Because ethnographic studies search for inner perspectives, describing rather than testing, and defining rather than categorizing the cultural and social construction of the community, methods used in such research are particularly appropriate for dealing with the individuals inside an organization undergoing change. Reliable information can be gathered, as trust is established quickly in conversation, and through the promise of total protection of identity.

This research has involved listening to and observing as many members of that community as possible, asking the right kinds of non-leading questions (without pre-determined answers that may bias the respondent), and analyzing the totality of what has been said --- as well as how it has been said, and what has not been said.

The specific methods used in this research have included: 1) gathering interviews and observations through audiotapes, field notes, and phone calls 2) participating in certain activities, 3) analyzing kinesics and proxemics, 4) examining discourse from a semiotics perspective, 5) using unobtrusive measures, and 6) analyzing official documents.

### 3. Data Analysis

Data analysis has been an on-going activity involving: 1) Induction, leading to the discovery of a tentative theory based on the ensemble of collected data, 2) Deduction, for drawing conclusions from the tentative theory and leading to data reexamination, and 3) Verification, checking out early theories against recorded, observed events to see if the developing "grounded theory" is indeed based in the data collected.

### 4. Trustworthiness of Findings

The credibility of these findings has been established by a thorough representation of the multiple realities, through prolonged engagement; peer debriefing; member checks, and triangulation of sources, methods, and observers. Confirmability has been established by demonstrating that the data and results reported are retrievable within the actual organized recordings, field notes and memos.

## B) Goals and Objectives

Based upon our meetings with central administration and with the SDSEP committee, and upon discoveries regarding core issues revealed during the research process, we identified the following goals and objectives of this evaluation research:

1. Clarify the identity, origin, and mission of SDSEP,

2. Define the image of SDSEP as it is perceived by teachers and administrators,

3. Evaluate how congruent SDSEP's implementation is with the program's stated mission,

4. Evaluate SDSEP as a concept,

5. Evaluate the internal consistency of SDSEP,

6. Evaluate the implementation of SDSEP,

7. Evaluate SDSEP's effectiveness in terms of instruction,

8. Originally to evaluate SDSEP from research in three, then later, five schools by request of the committee,

9. Provide a more complete picture of the full implementation of the program, following an evaluation of the pilot,

10. Decide on the possible continued existence and nature of the SDSEP committee,

11. Make suggestions for changes for consideration by Larkman,

12. Suggest directions for future research into the continued understanding and development of SDSEP.

From our first contacts with Larkman regarding this evaluation research, we were informed that the committee was interested in evaluating SDSEP for its ability in "improving student instruction through improving the professional. As the professional improves, we are hopeful that the instruction in the classroom and the effectiveness of the teacher and the administrator will be enhanced." (See objective #7 above) However, it is impossible to isolate "professionalism" as a single variable significantly influencing the quality of instruction --- not only because of the varied definitions of "professionalism," but because of the inability of experimental research to isolate such a complex, context-bound variable in the first place.

We have therefore sought to describe our respondents' and our own perceptions of professionalism, without attempting to evaluate its effect on classroom instruction. As Sarason (1990) states, "It is understandable if one hopes [emphasis added] that such consequences will take place... But even for those in whom hope springs eternal, the question they must confront is, how long will it take for the desired outcomes to be discernable?" (p. 62) While the present research does not examine such learning outcomes, we do make recommendations in the section on Suggestions for Future Research for Larkman to perform its own studies.

Another aspect of this research worth noting here (see objective #8 above) is the fact that the committee strongly felt that we must evaluate SDSEP in all five of the Larkman schools, as "schools with different personalities cannot be lumped together." Although qualitative research does not require random samples for generalizability, but rather is to be used for transferability through the process of induction, committee members were adamant that our research involve all five schools. However, we could not separate our results school-by-school, because to do so would violate the promise of anonymity made to respondents. More importantly, since the program is intended to apply district-wide, we needed to underscore issues that were generally common to all schools and provide a global picture of the program and its implementation; upon reading the report, all staff members can then reflect upon the relevance of these issues to their building.

It must be remembered that the issues that we examine in this report were not predetermined; they emerged from what our respondents said in the interviews, and from our analyses during and after data collection. Inevitably, certain issues, which might be considered important by some, were generally not emphasized by the respondents themselves, and the very principles of qualitative research methodology forbade us from prompting them to dwell on topics that we may have thought to be significant. The quotes included are not meant to represent merely the one person's opinion, but are used to illustrate a pattern of responses that emerged as clearly being significant.

Finally, we decided to list as an objective that we should offer our recommendation on the continued existence of the committee (see #10 above), although there is no agreement, even within the committee, on whether this is at all an issue, since the committee has been officially scheduled to disband this month.

We have addressed all of the goals and objectives outlined in this section, although not necessarily in the order indicated above: it was obviously impossible to pigeonhole into neat categories the complex, mutually-shaping realities of the SDSEP that exists inside the Larkman Public Schools.

## II. IDENTITY AND GOVERNANCE OF THE PROGRAM

SDSEP was developed over the course of several years, and is based on a considerable amount of preliminary research by the committee. Its identity is defined in the powerful concept of its three interrelated components; this identity was refined through lengthy interchanges of ideas among members. Although it may seem straightforward at first, this concept actually requires and indeed deserves the same serious reflection given it by the framers, if it is to be understood in all its complexity.

Although discussing the identity of SDSEP was not one of our original objectives, the data we collected from over 80 interviews suggested that it was in fact among the most relevant issues to consider. The main explanation for this is that SDSEP is a deceptively complex program whose subtleties are not fully represented in the 25-page Program Notebook, and which, as a result, is interpreted in various ways by different people, including and especially by those who helped develop it.

The complexity of SDSEP turned out to be a perfect match for our qualitative approach, which seeks to account for multiple perspectives; in fact, the perspectives we found were divergent enough to make us question what we had originally taken for granted: What exactly is SDSEP, and what is it intended to do? After months of research, we found that there were no simple answers to these simple questions, and we therefore delved deeper into the examination of perspectives on the singular identity of the program itself.

### A) Identity: What is SDSEP?

While this question might seem the most basic of all, we did not consider examining it, as mentioned above, until after several months of research; in fact, we now realize that we had not done so because it is the most basic question of all, and we had initially accepted the general assumption not only that SDSEP was a known quantity, but that it was known in the same way by all. As our work progressed, however, the respondents' diverse perceptions indicated that the program's identity was far from clear to most people in the district. Then, when we tried to look for a fixed point of reference against which to gauge these perceptions --- a comprehensive written document --- we found that there was none, except the 25-page Program Notebook, which we originally took to be a digest. The question of SDSEP's identity became all the more relevant when we realized that no extensive public documentation existed on the program's creation (except minutes of committee meetings), and we had to piece together the history and development of this program, as anyone not privy to the program's development would have to do to fully understand it.

SDSEP started out as a new and improved evaluation program commissioned by the superintendent, but became much more extensive than that when the development committee realized the interconnectedness of Evaluation, what they refer to as "Supervision," and Staff Development. However, what is now defined as "a professional growth program" (Program Notebook, I-3) appears only to exist as a fiduciary contract between the board, the administration and the staff, which, by definition, is only as binding as the good will of all parties involved to abide by its terms. From what most respondents told us, it is not clear to them whether SDSEP is a creation of the administration or the union, or whether it has a separate identity of its own.

This suggested the emergent theory that SDSEP falls squarely within the existing power structure of school. Teachers simply accept the program as it is, because it is there, and because they have been told by the administration and the union, "This is our new Staff Development, Evaluation and Supervision program." No one, even those who were extremely resentful of the program, hinted that its legitimacy could or should somehow be challenged; when serious problems arose (and there were relatively few), teachers went to their union representative for assistance, something they told us they would have done anyway.

In fact, since in most cases the facilitator is the MTA representative, issues related to SDSEP proper cannot easily be distinguished from those normally falling under union jurisdiction. It appears that, since SDSEP was, on the teachers' half of the committee, created and is now being administered largely by MTA officers, it is considered de facto under union control. This is not perceived negatively, though, since teachers are historically so unaccustomed to having individual voices that they find it absolutely normal to delegate their power to the union in order to represent them.

Although SDSEP is not a creation of the administration alone, with teachers accounting for half of the development committee, it would be inaccurate to report that teachers other than committee members have felt that they have in any way been part of the program's creation. All those who sit on the committee belong to an empowered group, namely the MTA, and therefore are perceived by most non-committee teachers as being part of "them," not "us."

While, technically, union people represent all teachers, SDSEP was never described to us as a teacher-influenced program --- on the contrary, it was treated as any other program that the administration could have mandated unilaterally. Yet nothing in the program's description says that it has to be controlled by the MTA, nor, as we were told, does the MTA even want it formally brought into contract negotiations. Nevertheless, having the union be in such a position of power poses a number of problems, which we discuss later in this report. Furthermore, such informal union dominance further confines SDSEP's identity in a grey area.

As we continued to pursue various avenues to understand the identity of SDSEP, it became increasingly clear that the absence of a detailed constitution was a hindrance to widespread understanding of, and thus participation in the program. Drafting a real constitution for the benefit of all staff members does not require that it become an issue of union contract negotiations.

As long as SDSEP's identity is not be "etched in stone," the program can only be thoroughly known and understood by the people who participated in its creation --- a problem complicated further by the fact that even they interpret it in very different ways.

This very fact raises a number of issues, the first of which is the lack of a unique definition of SDSEP, and of its exact purpose, thus contributing to the difficulty of determining whether it "works" or not, a subject which is discussed throughout the report.

Such lack of a precise definition is germane to, but separate from, the problems related to teachers' incomplete and often preconceived notions of the program. As long as the program exists mostly in its framers' minds, and knowledge about it is brokered by a few individuals, the "sense of collective ownership" that was described to us will remain a fiction, because most people in the district cannot form an independent appreciation and understanding of the program.

Furthermore, the program is constantly being redefined as issues and problems occur during implementation; yet this empirical approach is not the effect of omission, but rather of deliberate design, and is meant to preserve flexibility, as mentioned above. Framers spoke to us of the Notebook as "a living document" intended to be constantly revised and amended, and as something that did indeed have all the dimensions and ambitions of a true constitution. They described it as a document which would redefine the rights and responsibilities of all "citizens" in the Larkman district and establish a new atmosphere of professionalism, collegiality and trust.

There is a clear promise in SDSEP's principles to establish such a productive atmosphere; however, we have found that these aims are still limited to the framers' minds. In the typical school power structure, rank-and-file teachers --- the majority --- are and feel disenfranchised, regarding reform efforts as impositions from above and from the outside. These teachers will most likely retain a similar view of the program, whether it is precisely outlined in a written program document or not. This is why our report makes a number of suggestions to give SDSEP a firmer substance, as well as spread its knowledge and actively promote participation more equally among all school people.

The argument that a more substantial Notebook would serve no purpose because people do not read it anyway, true as it may be, assumes the premise that the Notebook's sole purpose is to be a prospectus for SDSEP, when in fact it constitutes the only comprehensive reference document available to the school community --- and to us.

Although there is no assurance that teachers would go back to a more comprehensive Notebook when questions arise, the fact is that they have nothing else to refer to, which leaves them with the alternative of remaining in the dark or consulting with a facilitator. While it is one of the facilitators' functions to clarify matters, the lack of substantive reference documents casts them in the role of interpreters of a somewhat cryptic program, and as such, holders of great power, which is another obstacle to fostering a sense of collective ownership.

The problem will only worsen when the current facilitators, who were almost all participants in the creation of SDSEP, are replaced by individuals who did not benefit from the mass of information that was exchanged informally (and often verbally) in the course of the creative process. Since there is no formal literature review, no history of how the SDSEP' concepts and procedures evolved --- except in its creators' minds --- the spirit of the program will only remain intact as long as its framers administer it, or can be consulted to answer the questions it raises. It becomes vital for a document to exist which not only incorporates the structural requirements of a program, but its origins, development, and philosophical foundations. Otherwise, occurrences of serious misconceptions about its identity, purpose, and implementation will increase exponentially.

At present, for example, the image of SDSEP for a majority of the teachers with whom we spoke is that of a program established "from above," which is not fully understood, and that they have no particular desire to understand any better, as long as such ignorance does not disrupt their life and their teaching.

More precisely, when teachers were asked in a non-directive way to describe the program, they spontaneously and unanimously spoke about evaluation, and more specifically about "in-depth" evaluation, as if "evaluation" were, for all intents and purposes, synonymous with the entire SDSEP. Although this is not a surprising attitude --- and several framers signaled their awareness of it --- it is an issue with antecedents more complex than teachers' mere preferences for the preservation of the status quo, and consequences more serious than rampant cases of misinformation.

In short, this lack of thorough information poses two problems; it concentrates power in a small group of people, and it imperils the integrity of the program for a future time, when the original committee members no longer control it. Committee members have said that it would be not only unavoidable, but also desirable for the program to evolve over time, even if its structure is left intact. But without any kind of fundamental document reflecting in detail the history, philosophy, purpose and origins of SDSEP, we feel certain that each generation will find it increasingly difficult to interpret what the program is truly about, even if its procedures are still being observed.

Unfortunately, the framers seemed resigned to that prospect; when asked whether the committee knew --- or felt it was important to know --- where the program was going, one of its leaders replied: "I question whether or not it has to be [important to understand]. If this program is still here 10 years down the road, will it look like this, and what things will have happened in those 10 years? [shrugs]" This would seem to indicate that the framers have never really thought in terms of the program's distant future, after they cease to be in charge of it.

Now, the devil's advocate might interject that this was a deliberate manoeuver to ensure that SDSEP's existence is tied to that of the committee, or at the very least to that of a leadership structure including the framers. The other reason for keeping the Notebook short, and information closely held --- that it left room for "flexibility," i.e. interpretation --- can also be seen in that double perspective (concentrating power and ensuring the existence of the committee), since the framers are the only people who can really interpret the program in a way that would potentially remain coherent to its original intent and spirit. Whatever the case may be, we generally found the lack of a substantive constitution to be a hindrance to the great potential that SDSEP clearly represents.

One of the most troubling questions, therefore, was to determine how one plan could serve the entire district equitably, since each school has enough leeway to implement it quite differently. A district-wide program must carefully establish constant parameters and allow for variation in others without creating constraints against the "personality" of each school, and conversely without allowing the spirit of the program to be subverted by idiosyncrasies in a school --- or a single person.

This can best be achieved by a judicious distribution of power and an effective system of checks and balances, not by leaving the guidelines to a vague minimum. For instance, allowing the concentration of power in one individual means that a given function can be overridden by personality, which may have positive repercussions (many teachers said that evaluation was not threatening because of the easy-going style of the evaluator) as well as negative ones, (several teachers questioned an evaluator's ability to simultaneously be supervisor, evaluator, and principal or facilitator). One teacher genuinely admitted: "There are things that are unclear to me: How can someone be your evaluator and your administrator and your supervisor at the same time? How do you put one hat on and then take it off and be the same person?" In any case, unpredictable repercussions occur when one individual may potentially hold cumulative power in the roles designated in SDSEP, as well as the power inherent in seniority, union and administrative roles.

While several features of SDSEP do attempt to counteract the effect of personality conflicts, they may in effect be canceled out at the global level because other aspects of SDSEP are not immune to idiosyncrasy. The fact that there is only one facilitator in some buildings is an obvious weak link, further weakened by the fact that virtually all facilitators currently belong to empowered groups, most notably the teachers' union.

In a similar fashion, most people recognize that "the principal sets the tone in the building," and we interpret this comment positively, as it seemed to have been made in such a way. We have noted consistency in the principals' perspectives that it is an important part of their job as school leader to set the tone: consequently, SDSEP manifests itself in harmony with the personalities of the five administrators involved. The program is not, and indeed cannot be "principal-proof," (nor do we recommend that it be); however, SDSEP must contain within itself the means to ensure that certain key features remain stable district-wide, no matter what tone is being set in the building --- otherwise, there is no point in having a district-wide program at all.

In its present state, however, only the procedural aspects described in the Program Notebook are stable, and we have found a reasonable amount of consistency across all schools: for instance, all teachers draft their plan according to the same format and on the same forms; yet, one principal may insist on meeting with each teacher, discussing options and physically writing the plan together, while another will ask the teachers to write their own plan, and sign it if acceptable. In other cases, beginning teachers almost completely deferred to their principal and/or facilitator, and simply accepted the suggestions that were made.

These are very different approaches, but they have led to what we found to be mostly "mutually agreed-upon" plans; we cannot judge, though, whether one approach is preferable to the others, or whether this should be one of those areas where latitude is granted in deference to the school's "personality." We believe that only the Larkman school community can cogently pass that judgment.

As for the plans, however, we voice our concern over teacher passivity in their creation. This passivity seems to go against the spirit --- if not the letter --- of the program; the question here is whether SDSEP should only mandate outcomes (such as the drafting of a "mutually agreed plan"), or specific procedures to reach the desired outcomes (such as the active contribution of both teacher and evaluator to the writing, and eventually to the carrying out of the plan). In addition, more active participation in the three non-"in-depth" years towards a major project is a suggestion we develop towards the end of the report.

In a similar vein, the function of facilitator can be interpreted in different ways, especially with regard to the dissemination of information about SDSEP: some facilitators may consider themselves mostly as resource persons who release information, but only upon request, while others take on a resolutely pro-active stance and systematically volunteer information to all their colleagues on an individual basis. We believe that the facilitator's mission could be much better, and more specifically defined, without compromising each individual's personality, and style of carrying out his or her responsibilities.

### B) Governance

One of the most crucial issues for the future of SDSEP is that of governance and, obligatorily, the constitution upon which that governance would be based. The committee, which is currently the de facto governing authority, is scheduled to disband in June 1994 --- a matter that the administration presents as certain, but that some committee members say is not settled. In fact, in our initial meeting with the committee, the question was raised with a degree of tension, and there were clear indications that several members were counting on our report to claim a continuance of committee activities.

If the committee disbands and no formal governance is established, there is no guarantee that the original spirit of the program will be preserved and, since SDSEP relies on the understanding of unfamiliar concepts, there is every reason to fear that its integrity will progressively degrade when its creators are not there to support it, and other people interpret it in terms of traditional perspectives. This fear is confirmed by most teachers' perceptions of SDSEP as essentially similar to TEPS, or any other traditional evaluation program.

It also seems inevitable that much power will automatically revert to its source, the administration. At this stage, the culture has not been changed by the program to the point that whatever democratic spirit that has been implied in descriptions of "professionalism," would be able to expand, or even remain intact.

When a problem arose because a principal claimed his legal right to supervision, as school principal, at any time --- an activity which conflicted with the provisions of SDSEP (although it is acknowledged in the role of school principal by the Notebook) --- there was no clear resolution available in the document. The principal could argue that it was his unalienable prerogative to observe teachers however he saw fit, as long as it was neither categorized under "evaluation" or "supervision."

While the issue has since been resolved by decree from the superintendent, adherence to the decision is actually based on the good will of the parties involved. This case exemplifies how, ultimately, the integrity of SDSEP is only as strong as an individual's commitment to submit to its guidelines; although compliance can, in theory, be enforced by the district, it does not extend to the grey area where SDSEP overlaps with state and other applicable laws.

As the committee was unable to make a ruling on the issue, the superintendent interceded, and was able to exert a different kind of power in making his decision. If then, the committee cannot make such decisions --- either because it does not have the mandate to do so, or because there is no concrete constitution to be interpreted --- then its existence, as it now stands, should be questioned.

However, in a modified format, a committee on SDSEP would be a valuable body within the Larkman Public Schools. In its present state, the committee is both too large to operate easily and not representative of all the constituencies in the school. Since most members were part of the original creation and development team, they could not remain in authority without compromising---at least in principle---the egalitarian ideal of the program. If only a few people are, for a sustained period of time, invested with most of the power of an organization, the system is an oligarchy, not a democracy in which a sense of ownership could develop.

As we looked at alternatives, we found that the idea of having a single teacher as program leader had been dismissed by several administrators on the grounds that this person would be unable, having no executive power, to effectively intervene in case of conflict --- especially non-compliance to the program by an administrator. This was presented as a cold reality of school life, which is an accurate assessment if we consider that the power structure stands unchanged; but it was discrepant in the administrative discourse of empowerment and democratic decision-sharing which we had heard. The suggested alternative, having an administrator as coordinator, would only further the problematic identification of SDSEP with the traditional power structure, and is therefore not a viable solution either.

Our suggestion therefore, is that SDSEP should be managed by an executive director, a teacher elected by peers, who would answer to and receive help from an executive board of four to six people. The board, comprised of an equal proportion of staff and administrators, could hold a small number of scheduled meetings per year, with the possibility of also calling meetings on an ad hoc basis.

All positions could be annual, with a two-mandate limit, or biennial, with a one-mandate limit, and board members should not also serve as facilitators. Because of the place of the union in the power structure, fairness would also dictate that at least half of the teachers who are board members currently hold no office in the MTA. Likewise, present or immediate past union officers could not be elected executive director in succession. Finally, because of their limited number, administrators would have to join the board on a rotation basis.

Such a structure would have numerous advantages: it would provide SDSEP with a stable, yet unencumbering governance system whose mission would be to ensure a proper functioning of the program as well as conduct periodical self-reviews. A staff-elected executive director could, both in a practical and in a symbolical way, embody the power vested in teachers; yet, this power would be balanced by the presence of administrators on the board ---which would also guarantee the exercise of executive power when needed. Elections and rotations would ensure that the greatest possible number of people from the greatest possible number of constituencies are not only represented, but actively involved in SDSEP, with a resulting sense of ownership for all.

For such a system to work, SDSEP must be articulated on a constitution which clearly delineates the distribution of power. Although the current structure of SDSEP essentially points to a more democratic process in some of the dealings between staff, we recognize that the purpose of the SDSEP has never been to instate a democracy, nor do we believe that teachers would generally be ready, willing, and able to participate in such a democracy.

As outsiders, we cannot specify where the boundaries of power should lie; this is a decision that only the Larkman school community can reach. We can only note that, in its present state, SDSEP is the product of a consensus between the administration and a few teachers active in the union, both, as we have mentioned, already empowered constituencies. We do not know exactly how much power each group is willing to relinquish in order to assure an active participation by the majority.

The fact that many teachers do not seem particularly eager to get involved should not, however, be taken to mean that they have no interest in a more democratic decision-making process. Taking responsibility, making decisions, and having a voice in the governance of school affairs are not typically part of teachers' culture. One administrator said, "It is tough for teachers to accept the responsibility of making decisions for themselves. Many of us say: `Hey, tell me what to do and I'll do it! ... I thought you were going to be giving me the orders.'"

Because this attitude is so ingrained, we must recognize that only the empowered constituencies can, on the basis of SDSEP, initiate a democratic process through an active campaign of information and sensitization of all teachers to the meaning and importance of change, and we recommend that it be done.

## III. Theory and Practice

To us as to the framers, SDSEP appears as an outstanding opportunity for administrators and teachers alike to grow professionally. This is because we understand the program and its value, and have been focusing our attention on it so intently. In contrast, most teachers have not had the chance to reflect on it, and therefore to grasp its full meaning and significance. Without the benefit of such focus, they tend to see it as just another reform program. Although administrators in their role as evaluators have had to acquaint themselves better with the particulars of SDSEP, they may not all appreciate the wealth of possibilities that the program affords.

Teachers are wary of all reforms, not only the ones invented by outsiders whom, they are convinced, know little about the real day-to-day problems of teaching, but also the ones developed locally. They also know from experience that most reforms can be more easily weathered than fought; a modicum of lip service and symbolic compliance keeps them away from trouble, until the reform "goes away," as others have done before.

Instigating change in such an environment is a monumental task, and it should be recognized that problems of communication and implementation are normal occurrences in such a process. The intrinsic value of SDSEP should therefore not be diminished because these problems arise; in fact, it would have been surprising if they had not.

In addition, teachers recognize that the original momentum of many reforms, even the best ones, is a fragile thing. One young, untenured teacher recounted how the initial thrust of SDSEP petered out as the year wore on:

> In the beginning ... it sounded very exciting. It sounded more exciting than it actually became. I remember sitting in the orientation and going home and thinking, what an incredibly professional district it sounded. [But] it sounded like it was going to be more involved than it is... In the beginning, during staff meetings, we were told about who was and wasn't in-depth, who gets to choose whether they're allowed to [do something]... but after that, it got pretty quiet. I remember a lot of explanations about evaluations, about how they were "events." The rest was really, I guess, left up to us. I was never checked up on, no one ever asked me who my supervisory teacher was, except once...

In this section, the three major thrusts of the SDSEP are discussed in the context of their intended, theoretical implementation, compared to their actual practice, activities about which both teachers and administrators spoke at length, and which we had the opportunity to occasionally observe.

### A) Evaluation

Evaluation is by far the facet of SDSEP which is most universally identified and best understood, as well as the only aspect of the plan which teachers perceive as crucial to their careers; not surprisingly, it is also the one which corresponds to a traditional element of a school power structure.

Evaluation already has considerable historical, psychological and practical importance in school culture, whereas supervision (in the meaning given it by this program) and development are relatively new, and without "bottom-line" urgency, at least, not in the eyes of the staff. Responses to our non-directive questions indicated that these areas remain ill-defined and relatively inconsequential; they are perceived as the disposable part of the program, flourishes of administrative and educationese rhetoric which can be easily ignored. This might explain why so many teachers have not bothered to learn more about the supervision and development aspects of SDSEP; they knew that nothing bad would happen to them if they did not, and they felt that nothing particularly worthwhile would ensue if they did. They therefore attended exclusively to evaluation.

Two very experienced teachers were so upset by being put in-depth evaluation that they focused all their interview on that particular process, even when asked questions about SDSEP in general. "We are good teachers, we cover everything" they vociferously protested, denouncing in-depth evaluation as a "duplication of effort," which to them only amounted to "making lists, going over the plan with a fine-tooth comb." For years they had been used to the principal coming in to observe them; they were troubled that "all of a sudden" they had to have conferences, and add "more structure, accountability, meetings, paper trail" to what they considered an already solid instructional practice. They were among the surprising number who admitted to preferring TEPS, which they felt had been mutually agreed upon.

This apparent paradox, which is explained by the preference for comfort that routine provides over the unsettling aspect of novelty, gives us a glimpse of why some teachers can deny or ignore the obvious benefits of SDSEP.

For example, a tenured teacher, who has not been in-depth, was sure that she would feel resentful to being put there, because she doesn't consider herself to be a "sedentary teacher," and as a result, objects to "big brother checking up on me." Just as her colleagues mentioned above, her perception of herself as a competent, reflective teacher was the main argument in her resentment of being put in-depth, which she thought was only an "imposition" for a veteran teacher like herself. She objected to what she pictured as a form of unnecessary scrutiny, and wished that her evaluator would simply give her recognition for what she was already doing. Even though the point of evaluation, as one committee member put it, is not "checking up on a teacher, but to have a teacher be better by the end of the year," it is clearly not perceived as such by teachers who feel that no improvement is needed in their instructional or interpersonal skills.

That same teacher declared having heard mostly negative comments about the program: "It's an extra assignment --- basically, that is what it's all about," referring to in-depth evaluation, which to her stood for the entire program, the rest being "business as usual." We found this to be a widely, if not universally shared view; as another teacher put it:

> Just do what you have to do and worry about the children and not the evaluation program... If you cut through it, it's basically just: do the job and that's it. It's just a small change over the TEPS... It seems the same thing except that here when you go in the fourth year, then the evaluation comes 3 or 4 times a year.

More than one veteran teacher had, remarkably enough, been left virtually alone in the past several years, and had not been obliged to participate in any special evaluation program at all. One such teacher was particularly satisfied with the infrequency of the evaluator's visits, the infrequency being quite logical: "He's always been very pleased with what he's seen, I guess that's why he hasn't developed a thing to check on me more often. If it ain't broke, why fix it?"

These are a few among many examples of the desire, and indeed the ability, of seasoned teachers to simply preserve the status quo, even though they are officially part of a program whose statement of purpose affirms that "the individual staff member has a responsibility to himself/herself, to the district and to the students to continue growing as a professional." (Program Notebook, I-3). Not surprisingly, many concluded, as one teacher did that "New teachers will take [SDSEP] seriously, but not experienced teachers." In fact, one new teacher explained that she did not mind unannounced evaluative visits because "They help me develop." A perception of the program, then is that it was designed for beginning teachers with little experience and the desire for constructive criticism to add to their growing repertoire of content and procedural knowledge. Even a teacher not on the committee, but very positive and fairly knowledgeable about SDSEP, reflected:

> I don't know if the older staff members may truly understand the actual implications and what they can do with it. [They think:] "Oh wow, I'm off for 3 years and I don't have to do anything," but I really feel the younger teachers realize that, "Oh, wow, this is enough fun that I can actually concentrate on things that will make me better..." That's a stereotype, but I really believe those things occur...

We found, however, that this teacher's stereotype was not fully warranted: some new teachers seemed perfectly immune to the potential advantages of the in-depth process because they expected to be closely monitored anyway, whereas some experienced teachers described it as a chance to really reflect on their teaching, rejuvenate themselves as it were, and in some cases make a show of their talents, which had gone unheralded under TEPS --- and, incidentally, still do in Annual Performance Review years.

One teacher told an anecdote of a colleague having a bad day and pulling out a handful of evaluations from a drawer to read over the glowing comments to boost morale. Another one, asked what she valued most in a plan such as SDSEP, said: "More than anything, it just reaffirms that I'm doing a good job; I'm doing what I am supposed to be doing. And it's nice to have those in writing, and that other people are seeing the same things."

Nevertheless, these are exceptions and not the norm which we encountered; the dominant attitude among veteran teachers remains detachment, if not straightforward resentment or even hostility in some extreme cases. One veteran teacher said that, "It doesn't matter what type of evaluation you have;" it's all just "extra paperwork." Another echoed this: "It is still within the confines of what you normally do, except for filling out a different form." One teacher, when asked whether SDSEP had made any difference in his teaching, said: "It really hasn't. Whatever I was going to do, I was going to do anyway." One teacher simply stated that SDSEP is "not important" and elaborated why:

> Whoever wants to watch me is welcome. More terms to check off. It hasn't changed my job, my life, hasn't changed me professionally. I am so busy! This kind of stuff didn't bother me before, and it doesn't bother me now. I have a very good relationship with the principal and my director, and I don't feel threatened by all these people, so-called "in power."

Her wording is quite representative of an overwhelming tendency to talk about SDSEP in double negatives; one of her colleagues, when asked by the interviewer what he would you want her to know about SDSEP if she was a new teacher, simply responded "Don't worry about it;" seasoned teachers do not even expect this or any other program to do anything for them; they merely want it to not do anything against them. Such ingrained pessimism --- or, should we say, lack of optimism --- is one of the major obstacles to the dissemination of new ideas through a program which does not initially appear very different from the myriad reform thrusts which a very experienced teacher may have witnessed in his or her career.

Lack of interest, sometimes expressed wistfully, was evidenced in many teachers' comments: "Since it's been in place, I've really had no input into or it or been affected by it other than I haven't been supervised for a year and a half. Nobody's come in to observe my class or my teaching technique." And while teachers and administrators may both agree that they are comfortable with the program, criticisms appear, such as "observations were rushed towards the end," the post-conference did not occur quickly after the event, and conferences were "wishy-washy."

The hostility and fear that some teachers expressed about being evaluated was also evidenced in many interviews. One teacher bluntly stated, "If I had my choice I wouldn't be in-depth, because it's nerve-wracking; they come in and sit in the back of the room and they're observing you and they're constantly writing." Whether any evaluation system would alleviate this teacher's fear, however, is uncertain.

Other teachers' distaste for the program --- defined, again almost solely in terms of evaluation --- was described using terms such as "scary," "overwhelming," and "stressful." One teacher felt "harassed," and that the program was being used as a "weapon to make life miserable." Ironically, even an administrator was hesitant to use the "support track" aspect of the program because of the belief that the label would stigmatize the teacher in need.

Generally, then, the evaluation aspect of the SDSEP was the best understood of the three thrusts of the program because of the teachers' focus on it --- conscious or not. It so overshadowed the other two components, however, that it became clear that most teachers equated the whole program with being evaluated, albeit in a different way than before.

The nonchalant way in which supervision and development were usually discussed contributed to our discovery that these areas were not taken particularly seriously by those outside the committee. Interviewees often acknowledged their ignorance about even the most general information about supervision and development without much self-consciousness, and even some amusement. Although they frequently spoke of the value of collaboration, supervision and self growth, they showed little appreciation or even understanding of the specificity of supervision and development in SDSEP.

### B) Supervision

"Supervision" as defined in SDSEP, holds the potential to promote the kind of collegiality and reflective practice that would go a long way towards fostering professionalism in the fullest sense of the term (see below, IV, B, 1 & 2): "It means that it is not just the principal or the administrator who's capable of supervising somebody... like a professional, you can supervise yourself. You're an expert, you can help supervise somebody else. You are both professionals and colleagues, you can collaborate... It is almost a replication of what we should be doing with kids."

We found ample evidence that several staff members relished the opportunity to break their traditional isolation, and consider new ways to expand and enrich the practice of their jobs, be it teaching or administration. An administrator remarked that:

> Teachers tend to be in their little rooms; and to get them out of their little rooms, and... to see themselves as people who have expertise, and knowledge! It gets validated, and it gets fed back; that is probably the best incidental staff development that we can do. I think there's a lot of power in that one aspect of it.

We do agree that it is powerful, but, as with other components of SDSEP, we found the implementation to fall short of what we (and the framers) believe this program could do.

A common observation from teachers was that, basically, they already routinely did what SDSEP labels "Supervision," and that it mattered little what "they" wanted to call it. We did not get a sense that many teachers perceived any sort of conceptual originality under the labels (expert coaching, mentoring, etc.), most of which were virtually unknown to them. Instead, the teachers often proceeded backwards --- placing their ordinary activities under the new headings as needed, in order to satisfy the requirements of the plan or to placate their evaluator.

Confusion as to the definition and processes associated with supervision abounded. A young, untenured teacher said that:

> [Supervision] sounded much more loose than an evaluation, something that you needed help with. You would like the help of a master teacher or someone you feel is better in that area. And what I got out of it was that person would either help you in that area, whether it would be teaching a lesson, or a conference ... give constructive criticism afterwards... without it being written up or going into any file.

He was then asked whether he had engaged in other activities, such as collaborations or coaching other teachers himself, to which he responded:

> Oh, sure! I went into another class, and taught lessons to that class with my class present, to another teacher who was not very comfortable with [that subject]... And I've had another class come in here... So would that be something that would be considered in a supervisory mode?

Another teacher, who admitted to being "a bit confused" about the supervision aspect, likened it to a "tutorial" for those who are not in-depth, in other words, a "toned-down process" of the evaluative observation.

This is related to a problem which arose on several occasions, and to which we have already alluded --- that of the multiple roles that administrators play in the supervision/evaluation process. Elementary school teachers overwhelmingly replied that their supervisor was their evaluator, and of course, this meant the principal. Teachers on other levels tended to have a different supervisor, although this was not systematic, and indeed there was wide variability in the understanding of the two roles, and in the choice of who played them. For example, when asked whether he'd be comfortable having his director come observe him as a supervisor, one teacher said: "I don't know, to me that's always kind of putting yourself on the line. He's my boss. I kind of like to avoid pressure."

In general, most of the teachers did not consider the "Sample Menu of Choices" (Program Notebook, DP-4) for supervisory mode, at least not in the manner in which they were apparently intended by the framers. Instead, teachers used the term "Supervision" virtually synonymously with that of "Evaluation."

In fact, when we asked each of the respondents whom their supervisors and evaluators were, we often were told, "All these terms are unclear in this school," "I'm not sure," and "What's the difference?" On several occasions we were even asked, "Do you know the right answer?" Alternatively, we were told by teachers that they had no supervisor, but found on their plans that they indeed had one, and often several. This points to the problem of information dissemination and clarification, a core issue which will be discussed further in the next major section of the report.

It is worth noting here, though, that understanding of this area was clearly the weakest, and showed the most variability. When individuals did know what their plans said (indeed, what they, themselves had written there!), we found that it was only because they had been warned ahead of time to have them available for our examination during the interviews we conducted. Otherwise, we were told, many of them would have not remembered what was on them. As one member of the committee said, fumbling through papers looking for last year's plan to show us: "Hmmm. No, that's this year's... `professional growth?' I almost forgot that what's I'm doing!" And two others who had been doing expert coaching told us that they had actually been doing peer coaching, but were not disturbed by the terminology differences: "Actually, we didn't know that this was called expert coaching. [The administrator] told us when we went in to [describe] what we wanted to do" for the plan.

Such information distribution on a "need-to-know" only basis has especially plagued the Supervision aspect of the SDSEP, and is, in part, the source of much of the confusion surrounding it. Additionally, the fact that the plans are filed away and easily forgotten contributes to the lack of incentive to analyze and reflect upon what is happening under the program, as opposed to what would happen without it. Since the most commonly used supervisory modes, expert coaching and collaboration, do not necessarily appear radically different from familiar aspects of teachers' work, it is easy to forget that they are supposed to have specific meaning within the program.

Another problem confounding the success of the Supervisory aspect is the simple factor of Time. Several respondents --- teachers as well as administrators --- indicated to us that, as in most schools, there was not enough of it to properly carry out supervisory activities. Even administrators admit that, "We haven't changed any structures in the district, to allow the time for teachers to do the kind of collaboration and coaching, and common work that needs to be done." Several teachers told us that any extra work that they chose to do with colleagues had to be accomplished before or after school, for the most part.

Nevertheless, central administration did express the willingness to allow anyone the possibility of participating in special supervisory activities, if a substitute could be arranged, on a limited basis. Most teachers have not availed themselves of this opportunity, though, and have instead chosen the path of least resistance. Inevitably, even being released for an hour or two during the day increases one's workload, they explained, for classes have to get caught back up, lessons have to be prepared anew, etc. A tenured teacher expressed what we found to be a typical view of the respondents, both in terms of clarity of supervision and with regards to the time it entails:

Interviewer: Have you received any materials on Supervision?

> Teacher: I was asked if I wanted to be an expert something or another...
> Interviewer: Did you want to do that?
> Teacher: I'm not really clear on what it meant... I didn't investigate it really. There was something about setting up an index of people with their specialties... that other people could draw on if necessary.... But the logistics of time --- I have all my classes to prepare for; I wanted to sit in on other teachers' classes to see how they do it, but there just isn't the time..." [He then quite effectively supported his argument with a very long list of academic and extracurricular tasks to which he had to attend to in the course of the day].

While we recognize and value the fundamental concepts that are proposed in the Supervisory mode, we have found through interviews that considerable confusion exists as to the precise definitions of them, and to the subtle differences between several of them, especially "expert coaching," "peer coaching," and "collaboration." There has also been confusion between "mentoring," and "expert coaching."

Consequently, we have found that the potential benefits of supervision, as explained to us, that they "open up avenues of professional collaboration and development that weren't there under the old system," are severely curtailed by the participants' lack of understanding, lack of time, and lack of motivation to learn more about them. Finally, we detected a disturbing amount of insecurity in many respondents --- both tenured and untenured --- who did not see themselves as being competent enough to serve as someone else's mentor, expert coach, or other "supervisor." We attribute this in part to the culture of schools, in which all teachers have traditionally been given equal status, that of "teacher," quite simply, and where it is not acceptable to "toot your own horn."

Indeed, it is only recently that roles of "master teacher," and other levels of expertise have been officially recognized in restructuring schools, and it therefore not surprising that most teachers are not yet comfortable with such appellations. When one tenured teacher was asked, "Would you want to be somebody's mentor?" he replied, "I don't think I have that much --- I think I'm still learning." And while such humility may be sincere, it does not engender an atmosphere of "Supervision," sharing of expertise, or growth that the SDSEP has hoped to create.

We have nevertheless heard of successful teacher collaborations in which the good will of both teachers involved --- usually already very good friends, incidentally --- served to make the collaboration interesting and fruitful. Teachers were able to share common prep periods, and had the self-motivation to prepare activities, lessons, materials, and class presentations on their own time, if only to make teaching more "fun." Yet, for the same reasons indicated above and in other parts of this report, our respondents tended to indicate that these activities would have taken place anyway, even if SDSEP did not exist. At best, they found that the program encouraged a more relaxed atmosphere in the building, thus possibly encouraging more supervisory activities than would have taken place before; but this perception always remained tentative and extremely vague, and no one was able to articulate exactly how SDSEP made a significant difference.

New teachers indicated their appreciation of the suggestions made by their more experienced directors; and one tenured teacher chose to have his classes and interactions videotaped in order to get the best kind of feedback he could --- seeing exactly what transpired and analyzing it, if need be, frame by frame. Here again, though, the role of SDSEP remain unclear.

A major factor in this problem is that the term "Supervision" is extremely misleading. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines it as "a critical watching (as of activites or a course of action)," and its connotations harken back to the "factory model" which treated teachers as workers in need of constant overseeing (as the etymology of "supervision") by a superior. To add to the confusion, experts in education refer to supervisors, historically, as "principals or central office administrators," and more recently as "instructional leaders." Most principals consider themselves ex officio supervisors of all their teachers at all times, regardless of any program that may try to limit this prerogative, as SDSEP does.

The most logical solution seems to reserve the term of "Supervision" to designate the supervisory activities inherent to the function of principal, vice-principal, director, etc., and to separate it from the areas covered by SDSEP, so that no overlap may occur. Since "administrators, by job description, are evaluators 180 days," (Program Notebook, DP-3) we can also assume that they are supervisors 180 days, at least in the traditional sense. There is no need to thoroughly confuse the issue by calling something completely different by the same name, nor is there a need to restrict administrators' supervisory prerogatives --- which are in fact responsibilities of their position, as long as they do not involve activities that would specifically go against the spirit of the mutually-agreed plan.

We certainly did not find it easy to select a more appropriate term for what is now called "Supervision." It seems that what the six designated modes have in common is the enrichment of one's practice, whether through some form of collaboration or team work (expert and peer coaching, mentoring, clinical supervision or collaboration) or through individual reflection (self-improvement). As a result, we feel that the term Professional Enrichment would be a suitable and meaningful heading for this aspect of the program.

It could be argued that "Professional Enrichment" may seem virtually interchangeable with "Staff Development;" we think that this is in part due to the fact that "Staff Development" is a misnomer as well, since it really consists of attending courses and workshops, which may eventually contribute to development, but does not constitute development in and by itself. We propose that this term also be replaced, with that of "Continuing Education." which is generally used for coursework intended for those already in the workforce, but interested in furthering their education.

The conclusion is that, as with most other aspects of SDSEP, there is no single and simple solution to remedy this particular problem without affecting other variables of the program. We take this limitation to be a good sign, because it suggests that all the parts are indeed "mutually influenced and interdependent." However, there is no doubt in our minds that "Supervision," and possibly "Staff Development," must be renamed as a preliminary step to raising the general awareness of the meaning and significance of professional enrichment recognized and encouraged by SDSEP.

### C) Staff Development

Some committee members pointed out that, in a sense, Evaluation and Supervision exist for the ultimate purpose of professional growth, "the bottom line," as one administrator put it, "being... improving instruction," and he added: "Staff development must occur in each area, and must translate into outcomes. It doesn't mean taking more courses."

In reality, though, "taking more courses" was precisely the most identifiable feature of the Staff Development component of the program for the majority of our respondents. Although we were told by another administrator that teachers "certainly understand the Staff Development side" of SDSEP, that understanding seems limited to the taking of courses, something that teachers have always done anyway. The difference, they acknowledge, is that there is now a much greater variety and availability of courses offered. However, they do not recognize the role of SDSEP in providing those new choices. Administrators virtually never discussed any Staff Development activities they took, except for committee members in their preparatory work for SDSEP's creation.

Even then, our questions about Staff Development were often misunderstood and necessitated elaborations, as in the following dialogue with an untenured teacher :

> Interviewer: What you're describing is the evaluation process; what about development?
> Teacher: I go in there for a Pre-observation first so she'll know what she'll be seeing...
> Interviewer: And that's what you would consider development?
> Teacher: Uh-huh.
> Interviewer: What about the other aspects of development in this plan? Do you know about them?
> Teacher: I don't think so. [describes pre- and post-observation conferencing] [...]
> Interviewer: Have you attended any in-service workshops or seminars or professional training?
> Teacher: I've been taking in-service courses, exceptional children, cooperative learning... I don't remember what I took....

The typical response to our inquiries about Staff Development was in fact a non-response: teachers simply did not have anything specific to say about it. Since most of them, when asked pointedly to elaborate, said that they were taking courses, attending workshops, going to conferences, etc., we always followed up by asking them what difference SDSEP made on their pursuing such opportunities. The answer, almost inevitably, was: none.

There was a vague sense that the number and variety of offerings had increased, but few people felt that they could definitively attribute it to SDSEP. Committee members, however, claimed that the improvement in offerings was indeed a effect of SDSEP, but it is still not clear to us how this can be explained, except by the fact that the district has invested significantly in Staff Development --- but then again, we are not sure that the district would not have made the same investment (which we were told was still above average for Nassau County), had SDSEP not existed.

Some people seemed to believe that a greater variety of courses was a positive outcome in and by itself, a situation that a committee member compared to the extensive menu in a Chinese restaurant. Although we cannot deny the benefits of having more choices, we must raise the important caveat that such variety is only as good as the users' ability to make an informed decision.

The majority of teachers, however, admitted to following a hit-or-miss approach; many asked their colleagues for an opinion on the courses they had taken, and word-of-mouth was the most often cited factor for eventual selection. Apart from clear district-wide trends that surfaced (ADD, Madeline Hunter, etc.), the leading rationale for taking courses was summarized thus by a first-year teacher: "We just take whatever ones appeal to us." In a more analytical way, one administrator assessed the situation as follows:

> The Staff Development component is underdeveloped at this point. We have no coordinated Staff Development program in the district; we have no central person to handle Staff Development. Therefore, teachers can pick Staff Development on an individual basis. It was very much "set up a resource library, everybody does their own thing." The Supervision and Evaluation component kind of got pushed off to the side, while Staff Development got promoted as the main thing.... That would have been okay... had it been done in a way that created some kind of system, or position, or proposed some mechanism. But it was never done that way. It was much more of a laissez-faire... It never really existed. It was implied; it's integral to the concept and philosophy of it, but it never existed.

We found no evidence in teachers' perceptions to corroborate that "Staff Development got promoted as the main thing," despite the fact that a sizeable amount of money was devoted to it, and that some of the framers worked very actively towards creating a wealth of course and workshop opportunities.

The lack of structure, however, was quite blatant, although teachers had no specific complaints about it; on the contrary, everybody seemed pleased with the choice and availability. However, they could not say whether SDSEP had any impact on the situation, and often denied that it had:

> Staff development doesn't have anything to do with me taking classes. I take them just to take them. For my own benefit. Not because it has to be on my evaluation at the end of the year. And plus for credits to get more money.

Some inexperienced teachers told us that facilitators did provide guidance in the selection of courses, but here again all evidence suggests that, in the absence of SDSEP, they would have likely approached a more senior colleague anyway. This is a normal facet of school culture, and it is not evident that having the person labeled "facilitator" makes a difference --- unless Staff Development requires special expertise in planning.

The theory behind SDSEP would indicate that "Staff Development" cannot be construed in its traditional sense any more than "Evaluation" and "Supervision" can: drafting a plan should involve integrating the elements of all three components, so that they actually work in synergy, that they are "mutually supported and interdependent."

This delicate task would indeed require expertise, but it seems to have remained a very theoretical proposition, whereas in practice, Staff Development at best ties in with the other areas. As a framer indicated,

> One advantage of this program is that we are supporting changes through staff development and supervision and we hope that we will seen then an outcome of that in evaluation. This took a long time to get across to a lot of administrators, and I don't know that we've gotten across to teachers.

There is enormous potential in the redefinition of Staff Development, and some committee members revealed a keen grasp of the conceptual subtlety which goes far beyond "taking courses." One of them articulated it in these terms:

> Staff development...involves almost any kind of increase in knowledge and understanding, through courses, through personal study, [or] through interaction with other individuals who may have more knowledge in one area than you do.

This would suggest that, in theory, "Staff Development" overlaps with what is now called "Supervision," and rightfully points to the principle of interconnectedness between SDSEP's three components. The average teacher, however, has only a one-sentence definition to refer to, "The purpose of Staff Development is to help the professional staff acquire new understandings and professional/instructional skills," (Program Notebook, SD-1) followed by a list of one- to five-word formulas as "suggestions." This provides no hint that we are dealing with an innovative program based on a unique concept; in its perfunctory form, such a statement sends a very powerful message that one of our respondents summed up well: "business as usual."

The idea of Staff Development has to be defined much more clearly, and we have every reason to believe from our interviews that there are many people in the district with valuable insights to contribute. How can Staff Development be "much more than taking courses?" This question could be used to start a district-wide conversation leading to a progressively finer understanding of how Staff Development indeed fits into the interdependence of the three components.

Such conceptual work must be balanced by the establishment of a coherent structure. One administrator suggested that "there has to be...two or three staff development thrusts a year promoted by the district, and let everybody else go and do whatever personal and professional development meets their individual needs." This could translate into three strands: district-wide thrusts defined by teachers' input on a majority basis, district-wide priorities set by the board and/or administration, and teachers' individual needs which may not fall under the previous two headings.

This part of SDSEP should be administered separately, perhaps by a small subcommittee, with facilitators as liaisons to help people draft their plans --- not just to choose courses, but to set down clearly how their Staff Development activities will dovetail with the other two components.

**D) Facilitators**

The function of "Facilitator" stands out as one of the most innovative an aspects of SDSEP, and it seems that much of the program's success depends on how effective facilitators can be, both as educators and mediators. The original facilitators have had the daunting task of disseminating the details of SDSEP on a day-to-day, and often personal basis; their commendable efforts now need to be complemented by a wider involvement from both teachers and administrators who were not originally on the committee.

In order to accomplish this goal, the processes of selection training, and defining more clearly the role of facilitators must be enhanced. The Program Notebook (DP-2) lists five roles in non-parallel categories, of which only the last three are really distinct; there are no formal guidelines on how facilitators are selected, how long they should retain their functions, what training they should receive, etc.

In the current situation, facilitators were chosen from those who sat on the SDSEP committee, which is explained by the fact that only committee members have enough expertise on the program. However, we are not aware of any definite plans to enlarge the pool of facilitators, and in the absence of any constitution, the selection of facilitators appears to be entirely under the committee's control.

The first problem with this situation is that it goes to reinforce the perception and the reality that SDSEP's ownership rests solely with a few individuals who already wield considerable power in the district, either as administrators or as union officers. Should any teachers become interested in becoming a facilitator, there is no known procedure for them to apply for the position, and the fact that this is a paid position creates a serious ethical problem.

Because of the budgetary issue and of the limited number of committee members, the number of facilitators in each building has remained minimal. This is a problem in terms of availability, but also of personality; having little or no choice of facilitators is a severe blow to the very function that they are supposed to carry out. The problem is compounded by the profile of current facilitators, who are already known as union representatives or administrators.

The confusion of roles surfaced on several occasions: for many teachers, the facilitator was basically the union representative with a new name, and the uncertain status of SDSEP sometimes made it difficult for them to decide whether some issues (especially conflictual ones) lent themselves to mediation under SDSEP or to the regular grievance process.

Regardless of these structural problems, the process seems to be working rather well --- as a form of mediation at least, since we found the educational mission of facilitators to be much less apparent. Because there are clearly not enough facilitators, they could not fulfill all their responsibilities in the present situation even if they tried; conflict resolution is obviously a priority, followed by assistance with the drafting of annual plans. This focus can also be attributed to the frequent (and partially unconscious) identification of facilitators with union representatives --- even by facilitators themselves.

Some facilitators made a concerted effort to sit and consult with all their colleagues, which is an overwhelming task in itself. Yet, as we have said, SDSEP can only succeed if everyone has a chance to understand it, and the most common experience we recorded was that teachers only started understanding the program when it was explained to them personally by their facilitator. Even then, their grasp remained very superficial because the focus was on drafting a plan, and there was no time for the facilitator to sit and delve into the more philosophical dimension of the program.

After months of research, it has become obvious to us that dealing with the procedural aspects of SDSEP is the least of all problems; teachers can easily learn how to go through the motions, but the real issue is developing an appreciation for the uniqueness of the program and the wealth of possibilities it offers. This is where facilitators will prove to be most precious, because there is every evidence to show that information on SDSEP presented during conferences, meetings and orientations sessions is largely lost on the participants.

Therefore, it is urgent that the role of facilitator, which several framers have singled out as an essential factor in the success of SDSEP, be expanded beyond instruction of procedures and conflict resolution. In the words of an administrator, they are the "keepers of the vision" of the programs, those who make sure it is disseminated and understood by all in the Larkman school community. For the same reasons, it is also urgent that more facilitators be appointed, and that they be regular staff members.

Two years into the full implementation of the program, we still found that a sizeable number of teachers had little or no dealing with their facilitators, or even knew who they were. This is not necessarily the facilitators' fault, since it can be in part attributed to the inertia which characterizes school culture. One of the facilitators explained that:

> Probably the biggest problem with our facilitator role is that teachers do not readily come to other individuals for help, assistance or guidance. Because teaching does tend to be an isolated profession; that is, your are in.... your own room, and often with the door closed, you begin to get a mindset that your are by yourself, and that while there are other people out there, they are for social reasons, not necessarily for professional reasons. So very often, people will not come to you. As a facilitator, I found myself going to people, simply to ask: "Have you got your plan? Is your plan in place? Were there any difficulties? Did you want any help?... You do it as casually as possible, because again it's very difficult for teachers... the moment they walk in the classroom, they think you're supposed to be an expert. And they don't realize that to a large degree it's a growth profession... So, to a certain extent, because of the isolation, they don't seek you out. If, however, there is a problem, you may get about one out of three seeking you out. Interestingly enough, what has happened is that the administrator/evaluator is more likely to seek out the facilitator than the teacher.

It seems that this is another area where staff members have to be educated before they can start reaping the potential benefits of the program. For this reason, facilitators cannot limit their role to making themselves known to their colleagues and wait for them to come seek their help; they cannot just send a memo around saying "Hi, I'm your building facilitator. Drop in anytime." They need to be extremely pro-active, seek out their colleagues, explain how they can assist them, and why it is important to learn more about SDSEP.

Yet, we should point out that the reluctance of teachers to consult with their facilitators could also be attributed to the profile of those who currently hold the positions; they hail from empowered groups, and as a result tend to be viewed as a part of "them." There is no doubt that teachers would approach facilitators more willingly if they felt on a completely equal footing with them. Facilitators drawn from the ranks would be the best possible ambassadors of the program: without them, the "sense of collective ownership" of SDSEP may not develop fully.

There seem to be two major obstacles to this proposal: time and money. We see a number of reasons why facilitators should not be paid: if they are, then we can be certain that their number will remain very limited, which we believe would prevent SDSEP from ever fulfilling its potential. Another reason is that paid positions in a program with no contractual existence are particularly vulnerable to budget cuts, and it is vital that SDSEP be organized to continue functioning even in the absence of any specific budget allowances.

Unless the Larkman school district is ready to allocate a fixed percentage of its budget to facilitator stipends, it would be advisable to set up a release-time arrangement, so that the position may effectively become part of a teacher's job. Naturally, this solution still requires expenditures to compensate for the unstaffed teaching periods, but if the district is at all serious about supporting SDSEP, then it must be ready to invest in it to some degree, "put its money where its mouth is," as an administrator put it.

Redefining the professionalism of teachers also means opening up new roles for them to take up as part of their contractual work load, rather than as add-ons which either burden them excessively or require additional compensation. In the same spirit, the district should then start adding more and more components, such as facilitation, to what can be normally considered a teacher's or an administrator's job definition.

We endorse the vision, which was suggested to us by different respondents, of allowing all personnel to become facilitators in turn, and to have several of them active at any given time in each building. Such a rotation system would be an ideal opportunity for everyone to learn about SDSEP in detail, and would eventually ensure a truly democratic ownership of the program. In any case, facilitation must be clearly separated from union activities, which are embedded in the power structure.

As one administrator commented, "I think that the teachers are more comfortable turning towards another teacher, almost in the mode of going to their union rep." This remark is quite revealing, because we have heard from many sources how teachers are reluctant to consult with their peers, unless they have a previous, usually friendly relationship; the most established "mode" of approaching a colleague for help is when a person is a union representative, so much so that the same respondent added a little later "if you only have teachers as facilitators, it will take on an aura of looking like union reps."

Every effort should be made to change this kind of thinking, so that teachers may start conceptualizing different roles and different structures of interaction within the school. At this point, SDSEP has become inextricably linked to the MTA in the perception of teachers, and it is crucial that they see it as a program with a personality of its own --- not a creature of either the union or the administration. It should be made obvious that the facilitators only happen to be also union representatives, because the MTA was the most logical partner for the superintendent to help draft SDSEP in the first place, but that the situation is a precursor to more involvement.

It is going to take a fair amount of time before all staff members can mentally separate SDSEP and the MTA, and it will only occur through a deliberate effort of the MTA to dissociate itself from the process. There will undoubtedly remain MTA officers among the facilitators, but union office should no longer be --- and be seen --- as a prerequisite.

**E) Planning**

Planning involves much more than deciding in advance what is going to be merely written on an individual's SDSEP plan: it involves a cogent review of the needs to be addressed, of the various strategies that can be used to address them, and of the factors which ultimately determine which strategies will actually be implemented.

In fact, planning requires a "professional" attitude and approach: definition of issues, diagnosis, research, informed review of options, and development of specific strategies to address the issues. We understand that the principle of having teachers and administrators draft plans is precisely intended to develop such professionalism, but generally the practice has fallen short of fulfilling this potential.

Writing a plan does not necessarily constitute planning. In fact, many of the plans we looked at do not reflect any of the features described above; they list outcomes, which is not much different from a TEPS system, except that the outcomes are more personalized and decided upon by the teachers, at least in part. When we look at most current plans, we are not always sure why and how these particular outcomes were chosen.

The fragmentation of planning must be considered in two dimensions: in time, and in the three areas of Evaluation, Staff Development and Supervision. Right now, we have no evidence that planning looks beyond the following months, which is relatively short term. Since plans are drafted in mid-October for the current school year, there is little space for foresight; although this can already be improved by drafting the plans in May or June for the following year, we should still consider the fact that professional planning must be a mid- and long-range endeavor.

We have heard teachers speak of the "direction" that the plan provided, but we do not know what will happen to this direction at the end of the year. Will it be pursued further? Changed? Abandoned altogether for an entirely new one? Administrators virtually never referred to their plans, except to indicate to us by whom they were being evaluated or supervised.

One of the characteristics of a professional is career planning which, although its details can be worked out one year at a time, must include broad, long term directions for growth. These directions can, and probably should be redefined all along, with the benefit of experience as new avenues for growth open up, but they help maintain a global perspective, rather than a lock-step, one-year-at-a-time view of things.

The second dimension is that of the three areas defined by SDSEP, which are meant to be "mutually supportive and interdependent." This is indeed a unique, valuable and ambitious perspective, and one which warrants careful reflection in the planning stage. The drafting of the plan should be --- for all concerned --- the opportunity for an individual to explore the concept of interdependence between Evaluation, Staff Development and Supervision, not just put down a series of outcomes that seem to fit in each of the three categories.

In fact, we endorse a young teacher's suggestion that those in-depth "sit down with someone and look at the interdependency of the three modes, and really see what's going on throughout the year, and not just now..., to reconnect and share, or guide." In fact this should be an integral part of Staff Development in the in-depth year, and would allow teachers and administrators to share perspectives on how this interdependence can be achieved, and what its impact is on the profession of teaching. This type of exchange would go a long way towards raising the general awareness of the importance and the originality of SDSEP's concept, and fostering truly professional reflection and collegiality.

The drafting of the plan should therefore be redefined as a consultation --- with one's evaluator, facilitator and/or colleague with relevant expertise and/or knowledge about the philosophy and procedures of SDSEP. It is important that this not be reduced to an exchange of documents, or a perfunctory briefing, but given the time and importance that it deserves, since this is when the tone is set for the individual's growth and development.

If the process of drafting the plan can, as it has been, reduced to a formality, it will remain just that, in practice and in people's perceptions of it. This, unfortunately, seems to be the case at present, with the result that most teachers and administrators, once their plan is drafted, put it away and rarely look at it again. The plan must become a substantive and important document, where the rationale for planning is explained in some detail; it should be looked at it again periodically, discussed at meetings, shared with colleagues, and annotated by the individual in the course of the year.

At the end of the year, there could be a "post-consultation" (on the same principle of observation post-conferences) with the people who participated in the drafting of the plan (evaluator, facilitator, colleague...); this could be an opportunity to reflect, with the benefit of hindsight, on the design and implementation of the plan, and use the findings to inform future planning. What is learned in this process would thus not only benefit the individuals concerned, but their colleagues as well, and some of the findings should be taken into account in periodical revisions of the constitution of SDSEP.

In keeping with the philosophy of interconnectedness which underpins SDSEP, the concept of planning opens the door to a radically new understanding of the in-depth process. Right now, being in-depth really means two very different things: for untenured teachers --- who expect to be scrutinized closely anyway, and for tenured teachers --- who tend to find it excessively probing. The experienced teachers feel that, since the district has already found them competent enough to be tenured, there is no need to reevaluate them as if they had just been hired, which comes across as a vexatious, demeaning show of administrative power, a message that they are not trusted even after years of practice.

As for administrators, planning the in-depth year is fundamentally different than for teachers, because it involves being evaluated by another administrator, with whom they already have a close working relationship.

For veteran teachers, TEPS were less offensive because they were much more like a routine check, which may be why several who were disgruntled told us that they far preferred TEPS to SDSEP. In fact, putting experienced teachers through the same process as novice ones seemingly conflicts with SDSEP's mission to treat staff "professionally." To apply the same criteria and procedures to all is to disregard the specificity of each individual's level and style of development; professionals at different levels should have the prerogative to define for themselves the most appropriate way to grow, and in theory SDSEP would tend to support this idea. However, in practice, putting experienced teachers and neophytes through identical evaluative grids serves merely to equalize procedures without producing equitable results: for example, allocating resources uniformly has been shown to not necessarily meet the needs of all. It may mean that recipients receive too much, too little, or simply, something not adapted to their needs.

Besides, we should do our best to avoid reinforcing the idea that SDSEP is about evaluation, and that the rest is very much rhetorical. The vocabulary currently used does little to help dispel that assumption, since the alternative is an in-depth "evaluation," or an annual "performance review."

At this point, most teachers have developed an understanding of SDSEP as being left alone for three years, and then put under the administrative magnifying lens for a year. Logically, they figure that they can remain dormant for those three years, and then "put on a show" when their time comes. In fact, one teacher expressed the feeling that

> Even without being evaluated, the in-depth evaluation doesn't sit well with me; I don't like having to go 3 or 4 years without any type of supervision or any kind of thing written down. Then all of a sudden, it's a mass overdose; 6 times. I'd rather have a little stress over those 4 years, than massive stress in one year. I also feel that you can develop some bad habits in those 4 years, and all of a sudden you're being evaluated in high dosage, and maybe you developed faults in your teaching.

Let us now imagine that planning is redefined as we explained above, and its scope is extended from one year to a four-year cycle: the immediate effect will be to prompt longer-term and more ambitious goals, requiring a more reflective and rigorous approach, and more sustained, consistent efforts. The fourth year would then come as the culmination of these efforts, when teachers, having brought their plans to fruition, can showcase their achievements for their evaluator, but also for the entire school community.

Far from being an "evaluation" --- with all the punitive and divisive connotation that the term carries --- this fourth year would give teachers an opportunity to show off their work and have it be recognized by the school community. Leaving teachers alone for three years is an invitation to dormancy, not because they need to be constantly kept in line, but because during the APR years they are essentially being ignored, being denied the feedback that so many of them crave, the incentive to pursue long term plans and collegial work --- in short, the chance to work and be treated professionally. A teacher commented sarcastically on his APR evaluations: "I get a `satisfactory job.' I could be moving mountains here, and I'd get `satisfactory job.'"

From what we have heard and seen, we do not believe that all teachers are necessarily happier when left alone; they only say so, believing that the alternative is being harassed by the administration, or given additional tasks to fit into an already crammed schedule. Besides, there is no justification to the claim that leaving teachers alone is a way of encouraging professionalism; as one administrator put it bluntly, "Professional doesn't mean you get to do whatever the hell you want." To say that removing some of the constraints traditionally put on teachers is to somehow make them more professional is misleading.

Although this is clearly not what SDSEP is about, the vagueness of its present constitution makes it possible for individuals to interpret it precisely that way, and the stark contrast between APR and in-depth can be construed as a "three years off the hook, one year in the hot seat" proposition, which is antithetical to a professional mentality.

It should be made clear that the basic unit is a four-year cycle, of which three years involve active planning towards growth and development, but with the understanding that teachers will not be accountable to exhibit a "finished product" until the fourth year. They would still have to work in the areas of Supervision and Staff Development, because if the philosophy of SDSEP is to make sense and to be taken seriously, it is impossible to conceive that somehow, these two areas could complement evaluation and be "mutually supported and interdependent" one year, but optional the next year. As it presently stands, though, this practice totally undermines the credibility of the program's philosophy.

The plans written under APR seem particularly weak in that respect. The objectives are often overly vague or general, but since there is no accountability, one could argue that it serves no purpose to make them more specific; the point is then, why put them down at all? The reasoning that, somehow, writing down an objective has symbolic power and creates a psychological bind is tenuous at best.

Indeed, in a closer look, writing a plan in an APR year merely creates a phantom structure of obligations which do not have to be met, or which can be redefined at any time, so that for all intents and purposes, they cease to be obligations. The framers are aware of this, but emphasize that such a ritual creates a feeling among teachers that they are trusted and respected; and perhaps this could be psychologically effective **if** --- and the hypothetical nature of the clause is very strong --- teachers already embraced the spirit of the program holistically.

The reality, however, is that many teachers (the most senior especially) like the increased independence and take full advantage of it, but retain an ingrained cynicism which prevents them from buying wholeheartedly into the ideology of SDSEP. They are wary of any such "program," and look through it for the hard facts: what do they absolutely have to do? Once that is established, they feel that the rest can safely be dismissed.

As far as SDSEP is concerned, the bottom line is that, at some point they will be put in-depth and evaluated, and that if the result in not satisfactory, their life may become more difficult. Beyond that, we enter the realm of inconsequentiality. The principle that Evaluation, Staff Development and Supervision are interconnected is a valid and healthy direction in staff development, which we applaud, but we found scant evidence that teachers share this view.

Those who did feel that evaluation was a much needed commentary on the quality of their performance fell under two categories: young teachers who thought that the input was genuinely helpful at that stage of their career (although similar input could just as well have come from non-evaluative supervision), and more experienced teachers who wanted to be reassured that they were doing a good job. This is symptomatic of teachers' firm belief that "true" evaluation can only come from one's superiors, and not one's colleagues: in fact, the belief that a teacher would never say anything bad about another teacher was cited as a reason for not considering peer review.

The majority of tenured teachers, however, failed to see evaluation in such a positive light, but at the same time --- and perhaps, coincidentally --- knew that they were basically immune to the program, that if by any chance they were found to perform less than satisfactorily, they could always "put on a show" for one year, and get away with it. The only such case we encountered revealed that, when a tenured teacher was "threatened" --- and it was perceived as a threat --- to be put in support track, or even clinical assessment, s/he could work it out by complying with certain procedural demands by evaluators, without ever really believing that any improvement was needed. The bottom line is that even if a teacher can be made to behave or perform in a certain way for one schoolyear, s/he may not convinced that change is necessary.

In general, there is a need to reinforce the message that all procedures in SDSEP are meaningful --- and if it turns out that they are not, then they should be revised or discarded, or they will confirm the feeling that an individual can go through the motions and satisfy the requirements without being affected by, or benefitting from the program. To be heard, this message cannot be handed down from above: its meaning, like all real knowledge, must be constructed individually through reflection and dialogue based on the SDSEP materials that the district and the committee have drafted as points of departure.

## IV. CORE ISSUES: POWER, PROFESSIONALISM, INFORMATION, DEMOCRATIZATION

**Core issues** are areas of particular concern which emerged from the statements, documents and observations we gathered; unlike the stated goals and objectives of the research project, these issues could not have been identified beforehand, nor do they necessarily correspond to the areas of concern that respondents consciously addressed or stressed. For this very reason, they represent the most original insight that we, outside observers, can contribute to the understanding of SDSEP.

The first thing you may note about these core issues is that they are broad and abstract categories; this is because they represent the common denominator among many particular issues which were raised most often by our respondents. In other parts of this report, we consider technical questions which can be dealt with through specific, concrete measures. The current issues, however, are fundamental ones which lie beyond the procedures of SDSEP and are woven into the culture of schools. Such issues are not "problems" in the sense that they need solving, or indeed can be solved, but rather in the sense that they have been raised and should be discussed further by all members of the Larkman school community.

A second noticeable characteristic of these issues is that they are interconnected, much as Evaluation, Staff Development and Supervision are meant to be within SDSEP. Originally, our starting point was **Professionalism**, because it is the one issue which is directly evoked in the SDSEP Notebook, and perhaps the most immediately present in most committee members' minds. The definitions of professionalism that we were given, however, showed that the most salient feature of SDSEP was a redistribution of power in favor of the teachers, which prompted us to bring to the fore a second core issue, that of **Power**. Our data further indicated that foremost among the factors accounting for the actual exercise of that power was **Information** about the program, hence our third issue. Finally, all previous issues combined suggested our fourth one, **Democratization**, which points both to the limitations of SDSEP as well as its great potential as a model for reform.

### A) Power

### 1. The importance of power

In 1990, reform expert and professor of psychology Seymour Sarason wrote on the necessity to base any considerations of reform on the existing power structure which characterize schools:

> It is egregiously clear that schools and school systems are political organizations in which power is an organizing feature.... Any effort at reform has to have as its goal a change in existing power relationships in the system. That, I hasten to add, is not a guarantee of success but it is a precondition for other alterations of the system.

Even though the SDSEP mission statement does not explicitly mention power, it is extremely important to recognize that, in the context of the school hierarchy, this program is very much about redistributing some of the power normally vested in school and central administration. As one teacher put it, "[The facilitator] showed us how to fill out the forms. She said we would take the power out of the principals' hands, and provide more equality."

From this fundamental premise, we can deduce several important features of empowerment programs which are directly relevant to SDSEP. First of all, empowerment is usually a top-down process, initiated by those who already hold power, despite the often grass-roots origins of the reforms. Everything that it proposes to do must consequently always be conceived of in terms of a school's (and a school district's) existing power structure, where power is granted "from above."

One of the powers thus granted must be the authority to administer and redistribute power. Such power would then be vested in a larger and more representative group than the one which originally held it; and it would be so guaranteed in a written constitution.

Since the process involved in SDSEP goes towards a more equal distribution of power, it is essentially democratic in its spirit, although it does not necessarily aim to establish an actual democracy. A corollary of this principle is that the process should not vest more power in individuals and/or constituencies who already hold most of it, before individuals and/or constituencies with less or no power have been empowered to the fullest possible extent, the ideal being a balance of power among all the constituencies.

Even though those who already have power must relinquish some of it, they should not be "losers" (or feel that they are). Everyone should stand to benefit from the process, albeit in different ways. Ultimately, democratization, discussed further below, can only be achieved if all constituencies are given equal opportunity to exercise whatever power they are entitled to, which supposes:

a) that they are informed about what their powers are, and how they can be exercised;
b) that they realize and understand the positive and negative aspects of holding and exercising power;
c) that it is made logistically possible for them to exercise power so that they are not prevented from doing so, in an active or passive manner;
d) that they are actively encouraged and supported to exercise power; and
e) that it is made culturally possible for them to hold and exercise power, even if the culture does not already exist and must be developed.

Given the a priori power structure of schools, the framers of a program such as SDSEP are responsible to ensure that it is disseminated and explained to all constituencies equally. Because not all constituencies share equal access to information however, a single, uniform dissemination effort cannot reach them all equally. This inherent imbalance must be compensated with additional efforts towards dissemination and explanation of the program to under-informed constituencies.

To be effective, dissemination and explanation cannot just be limited to the particulars or the logistics of the program; the philosophy and overall value of the program as defined by its creators must be conveyed as well. In the case of SDSEP, the fact that Evaluation, Supervision and Development are considered as equally important and mutually influenced terms must be emphasized, since for most people, SDSEP is only the replacement of TEPS, which was almost uniquely evaluative. It is the underlying concept of the program (its "spirit," as some people refer to it) which is infinitely more valuable and novel --- and infinitely more difficult to grasp than its mechanics.

If SDSEP's concept and its implications are not clear to all schoolpeople, it will continue to be implemented in terms of traditional ideas and school practices, and will likely make no significant difference in the status quo.

### 2. Types of power

Sarason (1990) provides some clarification on the meaning and role of power in organizational structures, specifically in schools. He states:

> In my dictionary, the first of several definitions of power is "possession of control, or authority, or influence over others." Another, more muted, definition given is "the ability to act or produce an effect." The first definition emphasizes a feature of interpersonal relationships, which explains why in that context the exercise of power is so frequently accompanied by conflict. To have power "over" someone is an invitation to conflict.... It is the first definition that is appropriate to the aims of unions seeking to restrict the range and substance of actions of those with legal authority for the school system. It is an openly adversarial relationship in which power suffuses the thinking of all participants and is most clearly demonstrated by strike action. No one is in doubt that power is the name of the game. (p.49)

The second definition of power cited by Sarason, "the ability to act and produce an effect," represents only one of four possible modalities of power which are logically conceivable. In a semiotic perspective, "being able to do," which is tantamount to Sarason's second definition, is only the first term, or mode, which allows us to deduce the three new modes derived by examining relationships of contradiction and opposition in this semiotic perspective. These other modes are: "being able not to do" (or independence), "not being able to do" (or powerlessness), and "not being able not to do" (or submission).

These distinctions are important because they illustrate how empowerment can fail, even though technically it appears that the conditions have been met for it to work. In the traditional power structure, the status of teachers is characterized both by "powerlessness" and "submission;" they cannot do what they want to do (except teach inside their classrooms however they want --- when they are not being observed), nor can they refuse to do what is demanded of them.

Several teachers described situations of powerlessness in terms similar to these: "We're not in a business where we have time to get together during the day, to confer with other teachers. The scheduling is impossible." Another, on her collaborative relationship, explained that it had worked out well: "The only thing was, that they never gave us a mutual prep period. They were supposed to figure our schedules, but they didn't, so whenever we asked for time, they had to get a substitute for our class... We didn't get to meet as often as we wanted to.... once or twice a week, but we met like once every three weeks."

Naturally, we know that teachers find ways around such limitations and constraints, creative and sometimes unorthodox ways to "beat the system." However, such resourcefulness does not affect their official status; we could even say that it reinforces it, because it focuses their energy and thinking on circumventing rules and existing cultures, not changing them.

In recent attempts to redefine the system, other school reformers have assumed that there is only one achievable modality of power: "being able to do," and that teachers, once given the chance, would reach for all that they are now denied; e.g. input on curriculum design, collegial interchange, experimentation with methodology, etc.

Research on school reform, however, has shown that what happens in reality is that teachers choose to exercise instead the "power **not** to change" (i.e., the modality of "being able not to do"); that is, they use their newly granted independence to ignore or refuse the opportunities to actively engage in decision-making, collaborative teaching, school governance, curriculum design and other prerogatives which reformers thought teachers would readily embrace. The net result is that the sources of power, which we describe below, are used not to effect positive change, but rather to maintain the status quo.

### 3. Sources of power in a school

Traditionally, school infrastructures have depended upon formal as well as informal sources of power. As we have observed, and as is a common occurrence, many of these sources of power are vested in single individuals. This makes the power gained a cumulative entity, and potentially dangerous in the hands of someone lacking the good faith we have typically encountered in the people we interviewed.

The best known formal sources of power are located in the hierarchy of the school organization: Administrative offices at the central and building levels, both academically-(directors) and non-academically related, carry considerable decision-making power. They also control budgets, and are usually the makers of schedules and therefore time allocations, giving them even more power over the largest sector of the school structure (except the children, of course) --- that is, the teaching staff.

Yet the teachers are not without power, for they play several roles in the conduct of school affairs as well. Obviously, young untenured teachers carry the least amount of weight, and are in the most difficult position to challenge any powerful body they many encounter --- administrator or another teacher. But they start the power-building process with the acquisition of tenure, then build seniority, which combines formal and informal sources of power simultaneously, and which allows them to create yet another power base, a network of personal connections throughout the school and district.

Some teachers further increase their power base, and become union representatives or officers, which gives them additional leverage. This clearly places them in extremely influential positions, and gives them access to the final --- and perhaps most fundamental --- source of power we have identified, that of information.

Union representation has also brought the benefit of membership on the SDSEP committee itself as an added source of power, and access to detailed knowledge of the program itself, indeed a potentially powerful position if one considers the accumulated power bases up to this point. Finally, as the committee began the implementation process, it chose facilitators to "educate staff members... assist staff in formulating, reviewing, or implementing their plans... [and] participate in conflict resolution." These people, mostly teachers, are well-known senior, tenured union representatives with established personal networks and intimate knowledge of the program they had helped to create. Essentially, these few people, whether they realize it or not, have an inordinately large influence over the success or failure not only of this program, but of the entire teaching community's ability and desire to work cooperatively with administration in the education of their students. We emphasize this fact here, as it became evident in the course of our research, that far too much of the program's implementation was dependent upon "trust," and "good will." While these are undeniably desirable conditions for any culture, they should not be the keystone to its survival or success, for they are, in fact, fragile and transitory.

Just as the framers of the nation's constitution distributed power between executive, judicial, and legislative branches, it would be incumbent upon Larkman to consider the SDSEP in a similar light, to reexamine the issues of power accumulation we have raised, and to decide upon viable alternatives, so that the SDSEP may not only survive, but may flourish.

### B) Professionalism

The issue of professionalism seems to have been central to the concerns of the committee; in fact, the most immediately identifiable mission of SDSEP is to increase teachers' professionalism. Indeed, this concern reflects the committee members' own professionalism. The question to be considered before we can judge whether this mission is being accomplished is, what exactly is "professionalism?"

## 1. How is professionalism generally defined?

Professionalism can have an absolute as well as a relative definition, and we must therefore first examine the different perspectives on professionalism, and more specifically, on educational professionalism.

In the case of "absolute" professionalism, it is the fulfillment of certain standards generally accepted in any trade or occupation: doing one's job carefully, expertly, efficiently, honestly, etc. In the case of "relative" professionalism, it refers to the characteristics of "professions:" the need for specific and substantial academic training at the graduate level, selective licensure based on performance and/or examination, evaluation by peers, self-governance, power of decision over the performance of one's job, perspective of continued growth throughout one's career, etc. When, in the traditional culture of schools, teachers are evaluated on how "professionally" they discharge themselves of their assigned duties, the reference appears not to be "professionalism" in the second sense, but rather in the first.

In light of the historical trends which have maintained teachers in a non-professional status through low pay, low licensure and performance standards, limitation of movement, isolation, subjection to administrative authority, lack of decision-making authority, etc., the avowed goal of SDSEP to enhance the professionalism of teachers is particularly promising because there is no indication that in the predictable future, teaching will be submitted to the kind of exacting standards governing the professions by a generalized legal procedure. Some modest reforms, such as ones regarding teacher competency exams, only underscore the fact --- and the inescapable law of numbers: that the sheer number of teachers needed to staff classrooms simply does not match the quantity of individuals who would pass muster, or even be willing to put themselves through the amount of schooling and testing involved.

A school district like Larkman, however, can well afford to set its demands above and beyond the average, especially for the new, as yet untenured hirees, if only thanks to the talent pool available in the Long Island area. Even though there is no state or federal law mandating that teachers be tenured and promoted upon satisfaction of stringent, "professional" standards, the district can take the initiative to instate such standards locally. In theory then, SDSEP represents a step in that direction.

## 2. How is professionalism defined by SDSEP?

Framers of SDSEP have said that it strives to promote professionalism by:

a) involving all staff members actively in their own evaluation;
b) affording all staff members control over their professional development;
c) granting all staff members more independence in the way they conduct their professional life;
d) fostering collegiality between teachers, and between teachers and administrators;
e) trusting teachers with self-governance by not systematically checking up on all aspects of their self-assigned career plans; and
f) promoting some teachers to supervisory capacities as experts.

What we noticed at first was that these objectives, most of which had already been met successfully to some degree, indicated that teachers had been given more power: the power to choose (or at least negotiate) the features on their plans and the modalities of observation, to pursue

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development options without being held accountable, and to be able to resist imposition or intrusion by their administrators.

On the other hand, there were few new obligations or responsibilities imposed on them, except to take care of their own evaluation and development, whereas before they would have been given a checklist of objectives to meet; this is arguably more of a privilege than a responsibility (although some in the district would disagree with that). In any case, teachers were not handed additional demands or more stringent standards to satisfy, in order to get tenure or promotion. When we consider the professions, however, it is clear that the rights afforded their members are counterbalanced by the obligations they must also bear.

Since SDSEP's creation owes much to the union representatives, it is tempting for the outside observer to see it as a "shadow contract" which, in effect, officiously adds a number of rights to those officially enumerated in the teachers' contract, without corresponding official responsibilities. Since officious responsibilities are only enforceable if individuals choose to adhere to the spirit of the program, the result may be that they will take the rights, but opt not to take the responsibilities: from what we have observed, this is the solution adopted by a majority of teachers.

Furthermore, the justification that SDSEP would improve instruction by making teachers more "professional," is based on a leap of faith; as we mentioned earlier, there is no evidence that "teacher professionalism" in any way alters the teaching/learning processes. Once again, though, this does not detract from the honorable intentions of the program to make teachers more professional by empowering them in new ways.

But empowerment cannot be a unilateral transfer of power from administration to teachers; it must be a two-way process, and involve teachers taking responsibility, even if, strictly speaking, they do not absolutely have to. Here again the problem has been that most teachers are still reasoning within a traditional paradigm of "passive responsibility," i.e. meeting demands from above. An administrator put it this way:

> It is tough for teachers to accept the responsibility of making decisions for themselves. Many of us say: "Hey, tell me what to do and I'll do it!" But when you tell me: "What do you think we should be doing?" Wait, I never thought of that. I thought you were going to be giving me the orders." That in itself becomes staff development.

The last notion is worth elaborating upon, because it suggests an original illustration of the fact that "staff development" does not have to mean taking more courses; this is development towards greater professionalism in the sense that it focuses on the individual taking responsibility for his or her own actions. As a rule, schools have not developed a culture where active participation and decision-making by all individuals is the preferred mode of operation; teachers and administrators must learn how to act and think differently, just as students must learn how to study and learn differently.

It seems particularly appropriate, then, that some of the educational concepts most widely cited for the enrichment of the students' learning experience would be applied to staff as well: active and cooperative learning are thus manifestly echoed in theory in SDSEP's Supervision, Evaluation, and Staff Development processes. As we have noted throughout this report, a constitution would clearly define rights and responsibilities, and the relationship between the two.

Theoretically, SDSEP presupposes a sense of self-responsibility which is fundamentally pro-active rather than reactive, and which would also be an important factor of professionalism. In practice, though, it has been possible for individuals to ignore or refuse the responsibilities that accompany participation in the SDSEP. Thus "self-responsibility" does not appear to have become part of the culture, nor is there any sign that it will develop beyond the circle of the committee members and close colleagues without significant changes made to information dissemination, as mentioned earlier.

### 3. How is professionalism defined by teachers and administrators?

For administrators, professionalism did not seem to be an issue because they consider themselves professionals, by the very nature of their positions. One explained his perception of how the procedures of the program may not easily be adapted to administrators. He explained:

> Being in in-depth was a challenge because it was difficult to set up a scenario with formal events for an administrator to look at an administrator. He ended up observing me at a department meeting, ... running an inservice course... and I can't remember if there were other events... It seems to be difficult to set up the types of events for other professionals in the district... for the school psychologist or the guidance counselors... It was designed for classroom teachers; the rest of us are somewhat auxiliary to it...

The program, as it now stands, grants teachers power in "professionalism;" but it is, in large part, the "power not to change" inherent in any empowerment. Such power is rarely recognized and addressed. Since teacher professionalism was an important intended outcome of SDSEP, we were concerned when we discovered the large number of teachers who did not avail themselves of the opportunities provided by SDSEP, or give any credence to the program's statement about new roles being defined for them.

Asked why she was so totally uninterested in learning more about SDSEP, a young teacher honestly replied:

> Teacher: I don't have a choice; I just have to go along with it until I have tenure.
> Interviewer: Why do you feel you have to go along with it?
> Teacher: That's what the Staff Development people told us; I don't have a choice about being in-depth.
> Interviewer: What do you project is going to happen when you get tenured?
> Teacher: Then they won't come to see me for 3 years, and then they'll come again, after the third year.
> Interviewer: How is that going to be different?
> Teacher: I don't think it's going to affect me anyway; I'm still going to do the same thing whether they're here or not; I just won't be getting evaluated while I'm doing it. Then when my time comes, they'll be here again to evaluate.

This young woman's rather grim view of SDSEP was not unique; several teachers viewed the program not merely as an annoyance, as we noted above, but as a symbol of their need to have their practice be evaluated and approved --- thus giving them the feeling that they were, in fact not the professionals they had otherwise been told they were.

On the other hand, there were a few teachers who felt invigorated by the program and by the options offered in the supervisory mode; these teachers tended to equate "professionalism" with "innovation," "experimentation," "flexibility," and, of course, "freedom." One explained that,

> Now I'm more of a risk-taker in the classroom, which is great; I have time to work with other teachers on the grade level; instead of: `now I have to get ready for the observation'... we work collaboratively and constantly confer with each other.

A common remark, usually said in the most appreciative manner, was that "SDSEP will leave you alone," or "Basically I'm left on my own, which is kind of nice in a way. They treat me kind of like a complete professional." It confirmed that the perception of being a "complete professional" was often practically reduced to not being monitored, although as we noted before, many still felt that "it's nice once in awhile to get a little input."

Most tenured teachers further believed that not only was it a good thing that SDSEP essentially left them alone for the three "off" years, it was their right as tenured teachers to not be bothered with such nuisances as evaluations. However, as one administrator pointed out, "Professional doesn't mean you get to do whatever the hell you want. Professional means you know what the task is, and somewhere, collegially, between you and your administrator, you work out the best mode [to accomplish it]."

Such differing perspectives emphasize the need for a district-wide dialogue on the exact definition of professionalism, a definition which could actually serve as a starting point to draft a comprehensive constitution for the program. The very attempt to have all constituencies agree on one common definition of professionalism would by itself bring all important issues to the fore, including the sense of being a professional, which transcends following guidelines into that all-important "spirit" of the program.

An administrator suggested that:

> Another step along the professional development continuum [is] development of people's perception of themselves as professionals. There's a lot of things in my opinion that work for teachers to not be professionals... I understand the need for unions, but... it's like, punching clocks and looking at hours doesn't lead to...the concept of a professional. You can't have it both ways. So I think things need to be done to enhance the teachers' views of themselves as professionals.

Like all other aspects of the program, professionalism is not something that can be mandated from above. Handing teachers a checklist of parameters and telling them, "meet those and you will be a professional," is contradictory with the very concept of self-determination which is inherent in that of professionalism. On the other hand, adding unilaterally to people's freedom to act however they choose and not be "checked upon" means ignoring the reality of a culture where taking responsibility is not the norm.

There is no doubt that SDSEP offers enormous potential for dramatically increasing professionalism in teachers and administrators, but at present, our findings suggest that only those who are already strongly predisposed to take full advantage of this potential actually do so. And here again, the only solution for improvement is a pro-active campaign of education in the philosophy of the program, so that all constituencies may learn to appreciate that becoming more professional is indeed in their best interest --- not to mention, of course, in the best interest of the children.

### C) Information

The success of a program which introduces ideas and practices previously unknown, and which requires that many familiar ideas and practices be reconsidered, is critically linked to the dissemination of information, and indeed to the existence of retrievable information. Because of the many new concepts included in SDSEP, the wide dispersal of accurate information is crucial to its success. The committee's awareness of this fact prompted them to organize orientation sessions, and to expand the role of facilitators to further carry the vision into the school buildings. Such efforts must not only be sustained, but dramatically extended.

Information is not a neutral quantity, but a very real source of power to those who control it. We should add that some of the characteristics of the professional are to be informed and stay informed. The professional is able to know where and how to find information, and to review the information before making decisions; by contrast, the non-professional is handed information on a limited basis, usually just enough of it to perform a given job satisfactorily. The non-professional does not have the possibility to make decisions, and thus has little incentive to try and find out where and how to find information.

These are the premises from which we can articulate a study of information in the creation and implementation of SDSEP, its understanding, and the dissemination of its content and procedures to all schoolpeople in Larkman.

### 1. Sources of Information

Our own experience proves that it is not easy to piece together all the information that exists about SDSEP, because so little of it is written down in a formal document. We had the chance to talk to those people who could best explain the subtleties of the program and, by triangulating all our data, we arrived at a fairly satisfactory understanding of it; however, few people in the district will ever have a chance of duplicating this process.

As far as we can tell, information about SDSEP is available from the Program Notebook, from minutes of the committee meetings, and from the minds of committee members. The rest of the staff has access to it through whatever can be construed from the Notebook, as well as what is disseminated in the Superintendents Day in-service workshop for new staff, building-level faculty meetings and possibly union meetings, verbal expertise from committee members/facilitators, and hearsay from colleagues who have encountered problems.

The experiences of people regarding their understanding of the availability of knowledge of SDSEP revealed a dichotomy of perspectives; respondents had either known of the program through official channels such as the written documents and workshops, or through informal means such as in verbal interchanges about a plan to be written, a dispute to be mediated, or a colleague having problems with an evaluation.

As has been emphasized throughout this report, it appears clear that the vast amount of misinformation, false assumptions, and rumor has been, at least in part, due to the lack of substantial, retrievable information, and most notably of a detailed, written constitution.

### 2. Knowledge and Dissemination of SDSEP

Contrary to the belief expressed to us by the committee that all teachers will eventually get to understand the details of the program when they go in-depth, we found that many of those who are, or have been, in-depth still do not understand how SDSEP works and, more importantly, what the whole program is all about.

Depending on the circumstances, people can very well go through the motions and rely on their evaluator or facilitator to map out for them what they should be doing to fulfill the requirements. In fact, as long as they exhibit the expected behaviors and play the game by the rules in the in-depth year, their understanding, let alone their adherence to the philosophy of the program, cannot be verified. It was made clear to us by some committee members that the intent was to avoid systematically disclosing a mass of information that people would not retain anyway, but rather disclose the information on a need-to-know basis. Although we confirm that the vast majority of respondents retained precious little from the general orientation sessions about SDSEP, we must also point out the adverse effects of not trying to inform them more thoroughly until "needed," which essentially means "when a problem occurs." Those who adequately comply with the procedures, with or without the help of their facilitators, may never encounter a problem and go through the motions smoothly. This, in fact, was presented to us as an ideal situation; but how can we consider ideal the fact that individuals can conduct business as usual under a program which is supposed to redefine their profession radically, as if it virtually did not exist?

At present, staff members do not have to take responsibility, as we discussed earlier, although they may choose to do so, and indeed should do so, in theory. Unless they have been convinced, at a very deep, emotional and cognitive level, however, that taking responsibility is in their best interest, we can only expect them to continue this pretense to go along with the program's procedures. This, in fact, is an excellent example of teachers being given a modicum of power which also entails responsibility, and opting not to take advantage of that power because they perceive it merely as "an extra assignment" with no obvious benefits.

Because of this misconception, those who feel disenfranchised do not even seize the opportunity to learn about the program, and as a result remain disenfranchised; this is illustrated in a dialogue we had with a young, untenured teacher, whose surprisingly jaded attitude could not be attributed to the fossilization brought about by years of routine, and was therefore all the more remarkable:

> Interviewer: Are you curious about the SDSEP program?
> Teacher: No.
> Interviewer: Did you see the tape that was made about it?
> Teacher: No, I didn't see the tapes.
> Interviewer: There was just one... How curious are you?
> Teacher: I'm not curious at all.
> Interviewer: Why not?
> Teacher: Because they're going to tell me I have to do this anyway, I don't have a choice; I just have to go along with it until I have tenure.

A teacher at another school echoed the sentiment: "Everybody seems to be comfortable with it. It is not a subject of conversation," while a third stated, "I haven't been thinking about it... It's a part of things that come and things that go." This last teacher also did not try to find out more about it because she was in what she termed, "avoidance;" using the metaphor of kids who let the storm blow over when they have done something wrong, hoping that the parents will forget about it in time; she completed the picture with the admission, "I have my head in the sand."

Not knowing about the program in general, then, and not knowing the location of their Program Notebook or contents of their own plans, appears to be a culturally-acceptable phenomenon throughout the district; several teachers were unable to even locate them when we requested them, but generously directed us to administration if we wished to consult the filed copies.

These procedural shortcomings were often accompanied by a lack of content knowledge about the spirit of SDSEP, which has graver consequences. We found that many respondents were turned off right away by what they perceived to be "buzzwords" and "jargon," which to them were the sure sign of pretentious reform rhetoric --- something to which they could easily turn a deaf ear. A veteran teacher jokingly remarked about the information session that "only teachers who were highly I.Q.'d understood what was going on; the jargon was above me, and I didn't understand what they were trying to do with facilitators and all."

A younger, untenured teacher, who had found SDSEP "exciting" when it was first described to him, told of a similar disillusionment, when the program's implementation seemed no different from what is usually done:

> Teacher: The events became lessons to me. It seemed that it was just a buzzword: "event," that just took the place of a lesson.... I was told not to call it a lesson. I don't know why it's called an "event," and why there's so much energy into calling it an event, instead of an observation of a lesson, or an evaluation of a lesson.
> Interviewer: Did you remark upon that when talking to someone involved in the program, such as your principal or facilitator?
> Teacher: I remember remarking on it to a fellow teacher. And actually they cleared up a little bit in saying: "It doesn't have to be a lesson; it could be a parent-teacher conference." But I didn't know that until later on.

> Interviewer: But you were supposed to draft a plan saying which events were going to take place... you could say there are going to be two lessons, as you called them, and then a Parent/Teacher conference, a collaborative meeting, for instance ..
> Teacher: In that case, I don't know that. I don't know that that's what I was supposed to have done. I was led to believe that I was allowed to choose any event that I wanted to, out of the three or four events of the year. And I think, that at the beginning of the year, I chose a science event, a social studies event... As far as I know it, in my plan, I don't have specifically written down that I want one of the events to be evaluated as a Parent/Teacher conference.

Such confusion, and lack of incentive to try and dispel it, was typical. Even one teacher who had been mentored/supervised by a committee member, and thus was among those who had the greatest potential to be familiar with the program, did not know that he would be evaluated only on the aspects of his teaching that he had specified, had no idea what the official program evaluation criteria were, and could not remember any of the criteria used for his in-depth evaluation.

Another, tenured teacher quite simply said that the program had "no impact," and that there were so many aspects to this new program that she only knew "bits and pieces of it," yet was not interested in finding out anything more about it. An untenured teacher was equally disinterested, but for different reasons: "I read [the SDSEP Program Notebook], but I didn't really pay that much attention to it because I knew that they were going to observe me anyway."

A young woman in her first year of teaching said she felt uncomfortable with classroom observations, although she expected unannounced visits and did not find the process threatening; in fact she actually believed that it helped her develop professionally. The cause of her uneasiness was a feeling that when the principal came to observe, she had to demonstrate a certain kind of teaching which was not her natural style at all; she usually ran her class according to a cooperative learning model, but thought that the principal wanted to see her lecture and give a "fireworks" display.

When asked to explain why she felt such pyrotechnics were in order, she first just replied "I felt that it was expected;" then she thought about it, and recalled that when she was student teaching, her cooperating teacher had told her to do "something spectacular" when the university supervisor came. Sensing that something was amiss, the principal queried her during their post-conference on her reasons for acting this way. Having found out what she assumed was expected, he told her that she "should be herself" whenever he came, and that she would be evaluated on how well she handled whatever teaching approach she felt was most natural for her.

Such misunderstandings were not always so easily resolved. Two veteran teachers were furious that they were obliged to "create something new and different" for their in-depth evaluation, but upon verification, recognized that they had only "assumed" that this was what being in-depth meant, allegedly because it had been suggested by their "supervisor" (a term they used for the principal). All the same, they had not attempted to clarify matters any further. Other teachers spoke of being "annoyed" at the prospect of in-depth, because it meant they would have to invent something new, to "put on a show." Here again, the animosity was based on a "feeling," not positive knowledge, that in-depth was an "inconvenience" or "imposition;" when asked to clarify, one teacher drew on her best source of information available, saying it was based on "From what I've heard..."

Although we believe that such lack of information is a critical issue, most committee members did not seem to think of it that way; they accepted the partial and limited dissemination of new knowledge and procedures to teachers as a given, and felt quite satisfied to have reached even a small fraction of the staff:

> One of the first things we discovered early on in our research... the popular wisdom and the research to support it says that at in areas of change, you have to expect that about 20% of the population that is supposedly in flux, refuses to do it,... doesn't want to get involved. And because that happened early in our research, everything that we did afterwards, we almost allowed ourselves a grace margin of 20%, which then made everything more viable, and we did not get ourselves involved in: "How the heck do you get everybody on board?" It's always "Let's be reasonable, folks, there are some people that aren't going to do it." The interesting aspect of that, is that I don't think we found our 20%.

This is a misleading attitude because it assumes that the 80% of the people who somehow go along with the program are "on board," in the sense that they fully understand the meaning and significance of the motions through which they are going. The fact is, most people in the district are in no position to "refuse to do it;" the passivity ingrained in the school culture alone would explain that 80% or more of the staff comply with whatever requirement are being handed down --- especially when they are fully endorsed by the union.

What respondents told us indicates that, excluding committee members and perhaps those closely associated with them, only a very small minority is mentally "on board;" the others are along for the trip only because they are hanging from the sides of the ship. The problem seems to be that the committee has equated compliance with active participation and understanding, and has not attended nearly enough to the core issue of communicating SDSEP to the entire rest of the staff.

Furthermore, since so few people can interpret the program's intent in order to solve emerging problems, and because they do so with great variability, it is very difficult for those outside the original committee to learn about the program, and therefore to develop a sense of ownership of it.

Since this responsibility must, by virtue of the committee's organization and make-up, fall to its own members, and to the facilitators appointed to help with plans and problems, there must be a system of information dissemination more appropriate to the needs of the currently-disenfranchised or unconcerned school population.

As we noted earlier, the personalities, styles, and good will of individuals involved on the committee have greatly determined its level of dissemination and thus its degree of popularity and success in the different buildings. We have encountered facilitators who sought out and worked individually with each staff member in the drafting of plans and the explanation of the program; we have also encountered facilitators who believed solely in providing information on a need-to-know basis, as discussed earlier. It has thus not been surprising to find a wide variety of responses regarding the content and procedures of the SDSEP; but this should not excuse the systemic lack of general understanding of and commitment to SDSEP.

Information, then, and its dissemination or conservation, has been both the goal and the victim of SDSEP. Framers have tried to teach the staff about the new program, but have, unwittingly, withheld too much of the fundamental, philosophical, historical, and written information about it to be able to successfully disseminate it so that it can be "owned" by those who did not actually participate in its creation.

The recommendations that we make throughout this report reflect our sincere belief that the lack of understanding of SDSEP and the weak commitment to it by non-committee members can be easily overcome; issues of power, with the rights as well as the responsibilities that accompany professionalism, are clearly interconnected with those of information dissemination and democratic representation in the SDSEP. The suggestions that we have made should offer options from which you may choose the manner by which you redirect the progress of the SDSEP, in order to make it become a part of the culture of the Larkman schools.

## D) Democratization

### 1. Implied democracy in SDSEP

By promoting greater collegiality between administrators and teachers, and by involving teachers in their own professional development, SDSEP clearly values a more democratic process of decision-making in schools. We certainly support this initiative, and believe that it is the best direction schools can take in establishing an environment of professionalism. We also recognize that the prevalent culture of schools is not conducive to easily accomplishing this task, and that many teachers and administrators will choose not to embrace a more democratic attitude even though it could improve the quality of their professional lives.

Interpretations of the principle of shared decision-making so essential to a democratic organization, to recent school reform efforts, and to the foundation of SDSEP differ widely from one person or one school to the next, so that some teachers --- usually experienced --- may actually feel that they are involved in a fairly democratic process, while others --- usually new and untenured --- can only negotiate the relationship defensively, and exercise their "power not to do" infrequently.

Nevertheless, the premise that drives SDSEP is precisely that, as one teacher put it, "the whole concept of it being mutually agreed upon changes the whole flavor of everything: `Oh, together we're going to do this,' instead of `You're telling me what I'm supposed to do.' So everything is more on an equal plane."

We found that the framers strongly believed in this approach, and indeed, the theory of it is quite compelling in its potential to give teachers the feeling of equality with their administrators. As one committee member told us,

> The tone has already been set by us mutually saying: "Look, I want you to come in here, and that's what I want you to focus in on..." Now I know what the focus is going to be. And then when that person comes in, I've set the tone, I've selected what I want looked at... instead of them selecting what class they want to come into.... And it makes us more on a level, instead of the other person being this supervisor and evaluator only. It's kind of brought me up to their level, by being the one to select.

When a younger and untenured teacher expressed a similar view, she did so from a strikingly different perspective, using the double negative, which we encountered so often, not to describe how "positively" the program was viewed, but how it was "not negatively" perceived:

> Interviewer:... How do you feel the SDSEP has changed your relationships with your colleagues or administrators?

> Teacher: With my administrator, I used to be afraid, and now I'm not anymore; and we've established a different kind of relationship; [the administrator] is not like, a boss, and I'm the little teacher; we're like, on the same level, equal.

The double negative continued:

> Interviewer: How does it [the relationship] manifest itself?
> Teacher: When we go in for the meeting, [the administrator] is not just writing up the observation, [but] is asking me what I thought... and we're writing it together.

In this interchange, contrary to what the teacher seems to believe, we do not have a description of a relationship between equals, but a structure of power whose tone and procedures have been attenuated to make the exercise of that power more palatable to the teacher. In this case, the reality of the hierarchy is revealed in the teacher's total submission to the process:

> I don't really know the rules; I'm not sure how often they're supposed to see me, only by what they tell me, [and] I just go along with it.... [My supervisor] suggested I become more involved in the writing process. I said `ok, I'll do that.' She basically suggests what I ought to be doing, and I agree or disagree.

Surprisingly enough, this was quite a prevalent attitude, especially among untenured teachers, as we mentioned, but was evident in tenured teachers' interviews as well, when they spoke of their desire to "play the game," to avoid confrontations and problems with evaluators. This is consistent with their belief that they, as veteran teachers, should not have to submit themselves to identical procedures scrutinizing their practice that novice ones should undergo. This also points to the limitations of the perceived democratic relationships actually in practice in the district.

### 2. Limitations of democracy in SDSEP's creation and implementation

For all the rhetoric on equality between staff and administrators put forth by the committee, we still very much heard relationships framed in the traditional "us vs. them" paradigm. Teachers spoke in such terms about the fear of what "they" would put in the personnel folder, what "they" wanted teachers to do, and what "they" were going to observe.

Throughout one interview, a teacher kept referring to a generic "they" which, upon verification, turned out to designate indifferently her supervisor, her evaluator, or the administration as a whole: "They come whenever they want," "they have a brochure on Staff Development," "they're observing you and they're constantly writing." Even the SDSEP committee got thrown into the pot and became "they," as several teachers indicated a widely-held perception that the SDSEP was merely a creation of Central Administration with union approval. Following our study of the program as it currently exists, this observation appears to be consistent with the fact that teacher representation on the committee is identical to union representation.

In a rather striking case, two teachers vehemently turned down the interviewer's request for personal data, arguing that "they" had no business asking for such things --- the teachers had somehow been under the impression that we represented "them," but whether it was the committee or the district was never made clear. Perhaps the teachers, themselves, did not know.

We encountered more evidence of the dichotomous relationship between teachers and administration as we collated our interview data and noticed that both of us had frequently had to interject "Who's `them'?" during interviews, since the teachers (administrators did not tend to do this) used this pronoun in reference to an unidentified, amorphous empowered group: the union, the district or the building administrators --- the teachers always being "we" or "us," and the others being "they" or "them." A typical case in point:

> Teacher: First of all, chances are the day you come in, they're going to pair you with another teacher.
> Interviewer: Who is "they?"
> Teacher: The union.
> Interviewer: The union?
> Teacher: Now, I'm not sure, but I believe it may be administration. But you're paired right away.... They even have a little luncheon... I don't know the details...

### 3. SDSEP's potential for democratic decision-making

Despite the existing culture of "us" and "them," which typifies virtually all school organizations, we recognize the potential for SDSEP to truly accord equality in decision-making for all, despite teachers' requests for guidance and direction in the hope or expectation that they will not have to exert extra effort and time on writing plans, setting up showcase lessons, etc. We also heard from teachers the wish that something akin to the substantive conversations we had been conducting with them would occur with more regularity:

> Teacher: In the beginning of the year, when we made out our plan, there was some guidance as to what direction I was heading in.... Since then, there hasn't been much follow-through on it.
> Interviewer: You said something similar earlier on. What did you expect?
> Teacher: It sounded like these things --- like what you're doing with me now --- were going to happen more frequently. Where we would get [to] sit down with someone and look at the interdependency of the three modes, and really what see what's going on throughout the year, and not just now. I think it sounded in the beginning that this was something that was going to ba a driving force. In Staff Development, that maybe once a month, that we were going to reconnect and share or guide...., and I still feel very excited about the development program, but it seems to me that didn't take off the way I thought it would.

This particularly insightful teacher thought quickly on his feet when we asked him how he thought the program could "take off," as he had put it, and he replied:

> Teacher: Maybe once a month sitting down with someone like yourself, and the new teachers or a group of teachers in-depth, and sharing what's going on in those three areas.
> Interviewer: Did you go to any member of the committee, your principal, your facilitator [with this idea]?
> Teacher: I've talked to other teachers about this, and it seems to me that the couple I talked to feel the same way... But I haven't gone to any committee members. [And] I haven't thought about it this much since the beginning of the year. I didn't run to one of those to voice my opinion; I really had no opinion!

Clearly, however, he did have an opinion; it just seemed that no one had taken the time to seek it out, and to give him, as well as other teachers and administrators, perhaps, the opportunity to articulate it in such an eloquent way. When later asked if he felt he had enough information about the program, he answered candidly, and added what we found to be a suggestion perfectly consistent with the ones we have made regarding the dissemination of information and stimulation of district-wide commitment to the program:

> I know that I have a pamphlet in a loose-leaf, in my closet, on Staff Development, but I have never picked it up to look at it. And that might be another thing to bring with you to a meeting to look through. To tell you the truth [though], I haven't thought of it in my closet, since the beginning of the year.

We feel that it would be a shame to let SDSEP's potential for democratization go unfulfilled, not out of a political conviction that schools should function as democracies, but because democratization is a prerequisite to professionalism. In many ways, the citizens of a democracy are very much like the professionals we described earlier: like a profession, a democracy can only work well if its participants are educated to make the necessary choices, accept and fulfill their responsibilities, and exercise their rights appropriately.

In essence, SDSEP proposes to treat teachers as responsible citizens, as opposed to the typical school culture where they are regarded as subjects of an authoritarian state; this is a choice which we certainly commend. The condition for success then appears clear: all must be ready, willing and able to assume their new rights and responsibilities, and this will only be achieved through education --- not simply in the mechanics of citizenship, but in the value of democracy.

## V. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is customary to recommend avenues for continued study following a research project, and we feel that Larkman has the resources to conduct or have conducted some of the studies we mention below. More importantly, we believe that the significance and potential of SDSEP in terms of altering school culture warrants further research and dissemination. Therefore, we offer a few suggestions on different aspects of the SDSEP: program creation and monitoring, document analysis, information dissemination, and reflective teaching practices.

### A) Historical Research on the Creation of the SDSEP

To fully understand and appreciate a document, a program, or a belief system, it is essential that succeeding generations of a culture be able to draw upon the written history of its people. One of the most fascinating aspects of our own research in the Larkman Schools has been to try and piece together the events that led up to the creation of the SDSEP; while it was not our explicit mandate to do so, it was certainly an important step in beginning to evaluate the program.

What we provide in the present report traces some of the origins of SDSEP, but does not nearly cover all the events leading up to the present state of the program. We therefore strongly urge the district to document the "birth" and "development" stages of the SDSEP, and to safeguard its records, as well as a narrative history of the program.

Someday, it will appear necessary to give substance to the now-invisible and inaudible complex decision-making processes and verbal interchanges that occurred over the past five years, whether for purposes of interpretation of the intent of the program in the framers' minds (which, as evidenced by the U.S. constitution, is likely to be an issue of intense debate), or merely for providing a context for a new teacher or administrator to understand SDSEP.

### B) Document Analysis and Interpretation of SDSEP's Constitution

Related to the first recommendation is one that we suggest will perhaps best advance the understanding, and therefore the success of the program: following the creation of a comprehensive document that will explain as thoroughly as possible the identity of SDSEP, we advise Larkman to perform a formal document analysis of its constitution.

Such a project would entail researching other such school constitutions, and would thus provide you new perspectives on your own program. Perhaps issues of internal consistency, ethical and moral obligations, and democracy would emerge, and you would be able to open a significant dialogue with people in the district, both newcomers and longstanding members of the community.

Since SDSEP's constitution would be a "living document" with concrete reality, it could be fruitfully analyzed side by side with more theoretical proposals on school reform. The results would undoubtedly provide invaluable insights into the actual feasibility of many of the ideas currently put forward in matters of school change.

### C) On-going Action Research on Program Implementation

On a purely practical level, there should be a continuing process of monitoring internally the structure and implementation of SDSEP in a formal, systematic manner. This should be carried out not only by the two most informed constituencies --- experienced and novice "insiders" to the program, but also by all others who would find in such research another avenue into understanding and ownership of the program.

As we have mentioned above, these constituencies include, but may not be limited to: untenured teachers, tenured junior teachers, senior (tenured) teachers, union officers, academic administrators (directors), building administrators, district administrators, committee members (or executive director), facilitators, and (possibly) SDSEP advisory board members. We are aware that these categories are not mutually-exclusive, and that the roles of people who fall into multiple categories must continue to be studied.

### D) Participant/Observer Ethnographic and/or Action Research into the Relationship Between SDSEP and Classroom Behaviors

Since it was one of the original expectations of the SDSEP that it improve classroom instruction, and since this cannot be determined in terms of a simple cause-and-effect relationship, we suggest that the same type of qualitative research strategies as we have used in the current study be adopted for a more intensive, longer piece of work that will involve much more time spent inside classrooms as well as with teachers and administrators in settings other than interviews and casual observations.

On the participant/observer continuum, this would be very close to the total-participation end of the range, so that the researcher would become as much a part of the setting as possible, without becoming so close to it as to "go native," or lose him/herself in the culture. The result would be a case study of perhaps a small number of individuals, with a strong foundation for the creation of a theory that might explore the possible relationship between SDSEP and the teaching/learning process.

The interest and relevance of such a research project is manifest: at this point, there is heated controversy over whether empowering teachers to make them more "professional" has --- or even can have --- an effect on the quality of instruction, and on the quality of learning, or, if its effects are limited to the teachers' well-being without necessarily impacting on the students. This debate is very much at the core of all questions regarding the usefulness of reform through empowerment, site-based management and shared decision-making, and SDSEP would provide an ideal basis for exploring such timely and important issues.

## VI. CONCLUSION

We recognize the tremendous strides that SDSEP has made in the evolution of school evaluation programs, with the development of interrelated components of evaluation with supervision and staff development. This is clearly the direction which we hope the nation's schools will soon take in advancing the professionalization of all educators. We therefore think it crucial that the issues which we have delineated in this report be actively addressed.

Foremost among these issues is the need to educate all teachers and administrators in the value of the program, so that they embrace its spirit and not just conform to its procedures. Although it has been said that having a non-threatening evaluation program is an achievement in and of itself, SDSEP can and must go far beyond this point, to become a positive and desirable agent for change.

This goal will be achieved by opening new modes of communication, as outlined above, with active commitment not only by the SDSEP committee, but by teachers, building administrators, central administration and the Board of Education. We firmly believe this to be possible, and strongly recommend continued support for this program.

# APPENDIX (PROGRAM NOTEBOOK)

## MISSION STATEMENT

The spirit and intent of this professional growth program is to instill and enhance the respect and trust between and among the professional staff.

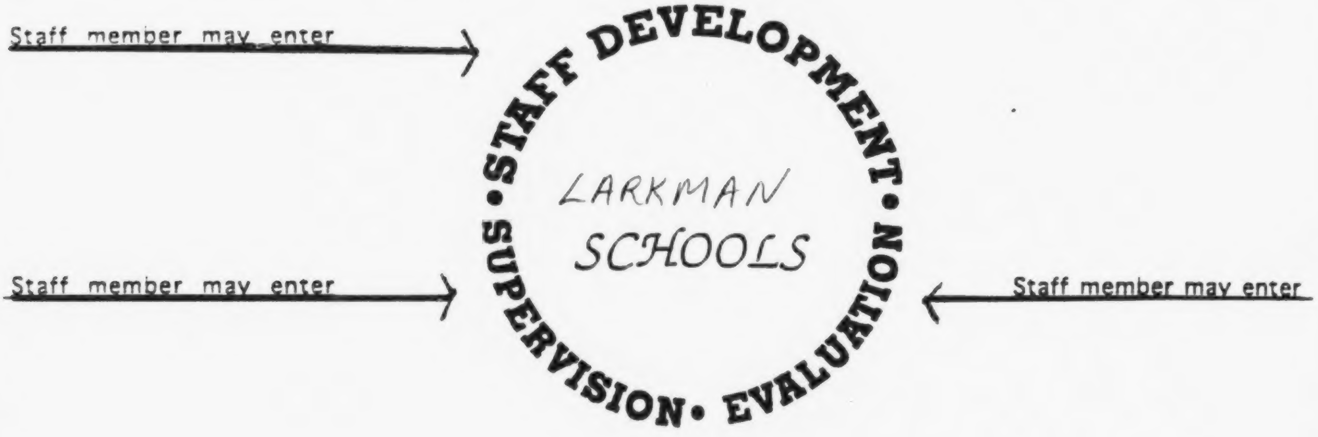
The individual staff member has a responsiblity to himself/herself, to the district and to the students to continue growing as a professional.

Inherent in this philosophy is the basic premise of the mutual respect supported by both the individual and the district and committed to the highest standards of professional integrity.

At Larkman, we believe that education and educators must strive for professional/ instructional improvement through staff development, supervision and evaluation - all three phases being mutually supportive and interdependent.

A mutually agreed-upon annual plan wil be developed between an administrator and staff member. This plan may include the components of staff development, supervision and evaluation.

### Professional/Instructional Improvement Process


Staff member may enter
STAFF DEVELOPMENT
LARKMAN SCHOOLS
Staff member may enter
Staff member may enter
SUPERVISION
EVALUATION

(I-3)

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of staff development is to help the professional staff acquire new understandings and professional/instructional skills.

Suggestions for Staff Development

1. Instructional Improvement
    - Classroom Mangement
    - Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA)
    - Instructional Improvement Model (Hunter)
    - Whole Language
    - Cooperative Learning
    - Attention Deficit Disorder Child
    - Learning Styles
    - Discipline
2. Curriculum/Content
    - Thinking Skills
    - Process Writing
    - Whole Language
    - Decision Making
    - E.S.L.
    - Creativity
    - Problem Solving
3. Personal Growth
    - Interpersonal Relations
    - Communications
    - Time Mangement
    - Stress Management
    - Fitness Management
4. Professional Growth
    - Clinical Supervision
    - Conference Skills
    - Mentoring
    - Team Teaching
    - Academic Knowledge
    - Study Groups

*These suggestions are not all inclusive. Modification will reflect the needs of the staff.

The process of developing the supervision component of the annual growth plan will be developed by the staff member and his/her administrator. The staff member and administrator will decide on an area(s) of supervision, a supervision mode and will mutually agree as to the level of expertise the staff member possesses. The supervisory mode will be selected from the preceding chart by referring to the grid. The identity of the supervisors must be noted and correlated in the plans.

**Expert Coaching** - a process by which a person who has expertise in instructional improvement, curriculum/content, personal growth or professional growth assists other professionals in gaining greater knowledge and/or skills.

**Peer Coaching** - a moderately formalized process by which two or more teachers agree to work together for their own professional growth, usually by observing each other's classes, giving each other feedback about the observation, and discussing shared professional concerns. **(Glatthorn)**

**Mentoring** - a training program for the novice teachers under the supervision of an experienced teacher.

**Clinical Supervision** - is an intensive process designed to improve instruction by conferring with the teacher on lesson planning, observing the lesson, analyzing the observational data, and giving the teacher feedback about the observation. **(Differentiated Supervision, Glatthorn, ASCD, '84.)**

**Collaboration** - a process of collegial cooperation for the improvement of instruction. Two or more staff members confer throughout the year on any topic related to educational pracitices and/or concerns.

**Self Improvement** - a process in which a teacher works independently, directing his or her own professional growth. **(Glatthorn)**

Name: ______________________ Date: ______________

## REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF COURSES TO BE CREDITED

## TOWARDS POINTS BEYOND THE (BACHELORS) (MASTERS) DEGREE

(PLEASE SUBMIT IN TRIPLICATE)

| Course Numbers | Titles | Points of Credit (Semester Hours) | University |
|---|---|---|---|

I hereby certify that the courses or courses listed above are not duplicates of courses previously taken, where the basic content remains unchanged.

Signature ______________________

Endorsed by ______________________
(Principal)

**OR**

Passed without endorsement by
______________________
(Principal)

School ______________________

Approved by ______________________
(Superintendent)

Date ______________________

(SD-2)

Name: ____________________________ Date: _________

## REQUEST FOR ADJUSTMENT FOR STUDIES COMPLETED BEYOND THE (BACHELOR'S) (MASTER'S) DEGREE

(PLEASE SUBMIT IN TRIPLICATE)

| COURSE NUMBERS | TITLES | POINTS OF CREDIT (SEMESTER HOURS) | UNIVERSITY | DATE OF PRIOR APPROVAL | DATE COMPLETED | DATE TRANSCRIPT RECEIVED (OFFICE USE) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |

I HAVE ARRANGED TO HAVE OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS FOR THE ABOVE COURSES SENT TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.

SIGNATURE ____________________

SCHOOL ____________________

____________________
(SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS)

(SD-3)

# SUPERVISION

The purpose of supervision is to assist and support staff in improving and enhancing their educational proactices. It is a non-evaluation process.

| | EXPERT COACHING | | PEER COACHING | | MENTORING | | CLINICAL SUPERVISION | | COLLABORATION | | SELF IMPROVEMENT | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***TENURED*** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ***Continuing in Position*** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Has Expertise** | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider↔Receiver* | | *Provider* | ▨ | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Self Development* | |
| **Has Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | *Provider↔Receiver* | | *Provider* | ▨ | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Self Development* | |
| **Seeks Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| ***New to Position*** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Has Expertise** | ▨ | *Receiver* | *Provider↔Receiver* | | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| **Has Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | *Provider↔Receiver* | | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| **Seeks Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| ***NON-TENURED*** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ***New to Position*** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Has Expertise** | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider↔Receiver* | | ▨ | ▨ | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| **Has Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | *Provider↔Receiver* | | ▨ | ▨ | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| **Seeks Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| ***New to District*** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Has Expertise** | ▨ | *Receiver* | *Provider↔Receiver* | | ▨ | ▨ | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| **Has Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | | ▨ | ▨ | *Provider* | *Receiver* | *Provider* | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| **Seeks Knowledge/ Skills** | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | |
| ***NOVICE***<br>*First Assignment Teaching* | ▨ | | ▨ | | ▨ | *Receiver* | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | |

**These modes are not inclusive. Modifications will reflect the needs of staff.**

▨ *If an area is shaded, one may not [illegible]icipate*

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## EVALUATION

The purpose of evaluation is to judge how effectively the professional fulfills his/her educational responsibilities.

Approximately 25% of the professional staff will be placed in an In-depth Evaluation Mode. For those staff members formal evaluation events will be recorded. The 25% may include a combination of the following:

> Those designated as "tenured-successful" will be in an In-Depth Evaluation Mode once in every four year cycle.
>
> Those designated as "tenured - needs improvement".
>
> Those designated as "tenured - new to a position".

All staff receive an Annual Performance Review (APR). A staff member in In-depth Evaluation Mode will receive a final lengthy {APR} wholistic in nature.

Every staff member has the opportunity to respond to his/her Annual Performance Review. Responses may include courses, projects, highlights, achievements, etc.

Unannounced evaluative events - may be part of the mutually agreed plan.

A pre-observation conference or outline should be identified by the evaluator and take place.

A post conference should follow an evaluative event within 5 days and a written report within the next 5 days.

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# EVALUATION CRITERIA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Interaction - | Education is a student centered endeavor that requires good written and oral communication to facilitate effective interaction and support with students, parents, colleagues and support staff. |
| II. | Professional Knowledge - | The effective professional posesses in-depth understanding of at least one discrete subject area as well as a broader knowledge base in psychology. |
| III. | Work Habits - | The effective professional exhibits attitudes, skills and qualities that positively contribute to the educational community. |
| IV. | Planning, Preparation and Implementation - | The effective professional plans and implements the various tasks required by the job. |
| V. | Professional Characteristics - | The effective professional exhibits on-going development and maturation. |
| VI. | Management of Resources - | The effective professional maintains and uses available resources to accomplish the task at hand and the job, in general. |

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The evaluation criteria are the basis for determining "Successful, Needs Improvement or Support Track". The failure to satisfy one of these criteria does not necessarily constitute placement in a "Needs Improvement or Support Track". However, if, in the judgement of the evaluator, there has been no improvement after notification and opportunities for remediation, via the Clinical Assessment Process, and the Support Track is seen as the most appropriate means of improvement, the person shall be placed in the Support Track.

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# Clinical Assessment

Clinical Assessment is a process by which a staff member has, in a period of time, the opportunity to exhibit improvement in the area(s) identified as unsatisfactory. When a staff member is placed in Clinical Assessment a new plan must be written with specific area(s) to be identified for assessment. As part of this revised plan a supervisor must be selected to serve as an expert coach and an evaluator designated. A facilitator should be included in this process to assist in the formulation of this new plan.

## FINAL DATES FOR EVENTS TO TAKE PLACE

### TENURED STAFF

October 15 - a meeting is held with evaluator to determine plans for year and discuss APR and/or In-depth Evaluation.

March 1 - tenured professional who had been noted unsatisfactory is placed in Clinical Assessment Mode.

May 30 - tenured professionals who had been rated unsatisfactory are to be notified of their status for next year.

May/June - final evaluation. All tenured professionals still rated unsatisfactory are informed of their placement in the Support Track for next year.

June 15 - final evaluation meeting, discuss needs and directions for next year.

# EVALUATION

## I. TENURED

### A. Successful

1. All staff will receive a written annual professional performance review.

2. An evaluation for the successful staff will include an in-depth plan at least once in every four years including formal evaluative events.

   More than one administrator may be involved in the evaluation process. These formal evaluation events are different from supervisory events and must be holistic in nature. The number of such events will be identified and vary according to need. The number of events must be mutually agreed upon by the staff member and the evaluator.

3. In off years, formal evaluation events may or may not take place.

4. The evaluation plan must be mutually agreeable.

### B. Support Track

A " tenured needs improvement" professional is anyone whose performance has been found unsatisfactory in one or more of the evaluative criterians. The person has been informed of this by March 1st. At this point a new plan is written that includes "Clinical Assessment". If, by the final evaluation, performance continues to show a need for improvement that person will be considered in need of support and placed in the "Support Track" for the following year.

1. All staff will receive a written annual professional performance review.

2. There will be an in-depth evaluation plan which must include clinical assessment and formal evaluation events.

   More than one administrator may be involved in the clinical assessment process. These formal evaluation events are different from supervisory events and must be specific in nature. The number of such events will vary according to need as determined by the administrator.

3. This staff member must be in an appropriate supervisory mode.

## FINAL DATES FOR EVENTS TO TAKE PLACE

## NON-TENURED STAFF

| | |
|---|---|
| October 15 - | a meeting is held with evaluator to determine plans for year and discuss APR and/or In-depth Evaluation. |
| January 15 - | non-tenured professional noted unsatisfactory placed in Clinical Assessment mode. |
| April 1 - | non-tenured professionals who had been rated unsatisfactory are to be notified of their status for next year. |
| June 15 - | final evaluation meeting, discuss needs and directions for next year. |

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# EVALUATION

## II. NON TENURED (Full and Part-time)

In-depth Evaluation (to provide data for retention or reference)

1. All staff will receive a written annual professional performance review.

2. An in-depth evaluation plan will be conducted annually including evaluation events.

   More than one administrator may be involved in the evaluation process. These formal evaluation events are different from supervisory events and must be holistic in nature. The number of such events will be identified and vary according to need. The number of events will be mutually agreed upon.

3. The staff members must also be in an appropriate supervisory mode.

All non tenured professionals will follow an In-depth Evaluation Plan. In cases where the non tenured professional's performance is unsatisfactory he/she will be placed in a Clinical Assessment Mode by January 15th. If improvement is not seen by April 1st, the "needs improvement" professional will be notified of his/her status for the following year.

# Evaluation Event

Staff Member: ____________________

School: ____________________

Evaluator: ____________________

**Pre-Event Conference** Date: __________ Time: __________

---

**Event** Date: ________ Time/Period: ______________

Type of Event: ---------------------------------------------

(E-9)

**Post-Event Conference** Date:___________ Time:___________

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ______________________ | _______ | __________________ | ________ |
| Signature of Staff Member * | Date | Signature of Evaluator | Date |

*Signature indicates that staff member has received copy.

(E-10)

## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

(for staff member not in an In-Depth Plan for Evaluation)

I. Based on the attached Evaluation Criteria ______________________________
Name

has completed his/her responsibilities for the school year ______________.

or...

II. Based on the attached Evaluation Criteria ______________________________
Name

has completed his/her responsibilities for the school year ______________

with the exception of the following criterion/criteria:

It is the responsibility of the administrator to type in the appropriate statement on the A.P.R.

(E-12)

## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

## STATEMENT BY EVALUATOR

Comments by Individual: ______________________________

Staff Member's Signature* Date Evaluator's Signature

*Indicates staff member has read and received a copy.

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

Education is a student-centered endeavor that requires professional knowledge, good work habits, planning, preparation and implementation skills, positive personal characteristics and management of resources to facilitate effective interaction with students, parents, colleagues and support staff.

| CRITERIA | DEFINITION |
|---|---|
| INTERACTION | The staff member's use of communication skills with students, parents, colleagues and support staff. |
| PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE | Knowledge utilized to meet the staff member's role, function and responsibilities. |
| WORK HABITS | A staff member's work ethics and habits and their effect on his/her performance. |
| PLANNING, PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION | Ability and skill in formulating and carrying out plans of action needed for the staff member's performance. |
| PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS | Those qualities of a staff member that reflect the person's levels of development and maturation. |
| MANAGEMENT RESOURCES | The level of a staff member's organizational and management skills in the identification and use of resources. |

# IN-DEPTH EVALUATION
# ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Staff Members's Name ____________________ Date _______ School __________

## STATEMENT BY EVALUATOR

____________________
Staff Member's Signature*

_______
Date

____________________
Evaluator's Signature

____________________
Principal's Signature

*Indicates staff member has read and received a copy.

## IN-DEPTH EVALUATION
## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Comments by Individual:

Staff Member's Signature* Date Evaluator's Signature

*Indicates staff member has read and received a copy.

(E-16)

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT/SUPERVISION/EVALUATION PLAN

Staff Member: ______________________________

School(s): ____________________ Year: ______________

Assignment(s): ______________________________

Staff Development Activity(ies)

Supervisory Mode(s)

Evaluation

A copy of this plan was received by:

| | |
|---|---|
| Signature | Date |

This plan was mutually agreed upon by:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Signature | Date | Signature |

# DEVELOPING ANNUAL GROWTH PLANS

Every year each staff member will meet with their evaluator(s) (Superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, assistant principal, director, etc.) by October 15th, to develop a professional growth plan for that school year.

The staff member should use the time prior to the planning meeting to explore ideas in staff development, supervision and evaluation. Then meet with one of the facilitators, so that when you come to the meeting you will be prepared to develop a mutually agreed upon plan.

If a staff member and an evaluator cannot reach a mutually agreed upon plan, a facilitator will help the staff member reach this goal.

At your final evaluation meetings you should indiciate your needs and directions for next year if possible.

(DP-1)

# THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATORS

1. The facilitators will have regular contact with staff members.
2. The facilitators will be available on a scheduled basis.
3. The facilitators will participate in conflict resolution where necessary.
4. The facilitators will educate staff members regarding options within the program.
5. The facilitators will be available to assist staff in formulating, reviewing or implementing their plans.

(DP-2)

# GUIDELINES

1. Administrators, by job description, are evaluators 180 days, but may be a supervisor in a particular area. The evaluator does not evaluate supervised events, rather perceives the effectiveness of a job performance in a global (holistic) context based upon the professional criteria in the model. (If the roles of supervisor and evaluator interfere with each other, a plan may be mutually modified to include a different supervisory mode and designate the administrator as the evaluator, rather than the supervisor. This is but one step in the process that may lead to future plans including In-Depth Evaluation, Support Track and other supervisory modes.)

2. -A K to 5 non-tenured teacher will be evaluated by the building principal and the appropriate K-12 director. (Music, Art, Physical Ed. and ESL).

   -A 7 to 12 non-tenured teacher, in the first and second years will be evaluated by a builidng administrator and a director. In the third year (of the tenure year) the building prinicpal and a director will be the evaluators.

   -A 6th grade classroom teacher and similar split situation teachers in their first and second years will be evaluated by a building administrator and a director. In the third year (of the tenure year) the building principal and a building administrator will be the evaluators.

   -A K to 12 non-tenured teacher in more than one school, without a director, will be evaluated in the first and second years by a home school administrator and by an administrator from another school. In the 3rd year (of the tenure year), the home school principal and an administrator from another school will be the evaluators.

   -A K to 12 non-tenured in more than one school with a director, in the 1st and 2nd years will be evaluated by a home school administrator and a director. In the 3rd year (of the tenure year) the home school principal and the director will be the evaluators.

   -All part time personnel, regular substitutes and permanent substitutes will be in an In-Depth Evaluation Mode, as part of their plan.

3. A principal should have approximately 25% of his/her tenured staff on plans that include In-Depth Evaluation Mode every year. Non-tenured and Support Track staff are not included in this percentage.

(DP-3)

# SAMPLE MENU OF CHOICES

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Staff Development Activity(ies)

- --College Courses
- --Study Groups
- --Conferences
- --Seminars
- --Video Tapes
- --In Service
- --Workshops
- --Audio Tapes

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Supervisory Mode(s)

Clinical Supervision - is an intensive process designed to improve instruction by conferring with the teacher on lesson planning, observing the lesson, analyzing the observational data, and giving the teacher feedback about the observation.

Collaboration - a process of collegial cooperation for the improvement of instruction.

Expert Coaching - a process by which a person who has expertise in instructional improvement, curriculum/content, personal growth or professional growth assists other professionals in gaining greater knowledge and/or skills.

Mentoring - a training program for the novice teachers under the supervision of an experienced teacher.

Peer Coaching - a moderately formalized process by which two or more teachers agree to work together for their own professional growth, usually by observing each other's classes, giving each other feedback about the observation, and discussing shared professional concerns.

Self Improvement - a process in which a teacher works independently, directing his or her own professional growth.

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Evaluation Events

- --Classroom Observations
- --Parent/Teacher Conferences
- --Teacher/Student Conferences
- --Portfolios
- --Curriculum Units
- --Professional Presentations
- --Committee Membership

*These suggestions are not all inclusive. Modification will reflect the needs of the staff.

(DP-4)